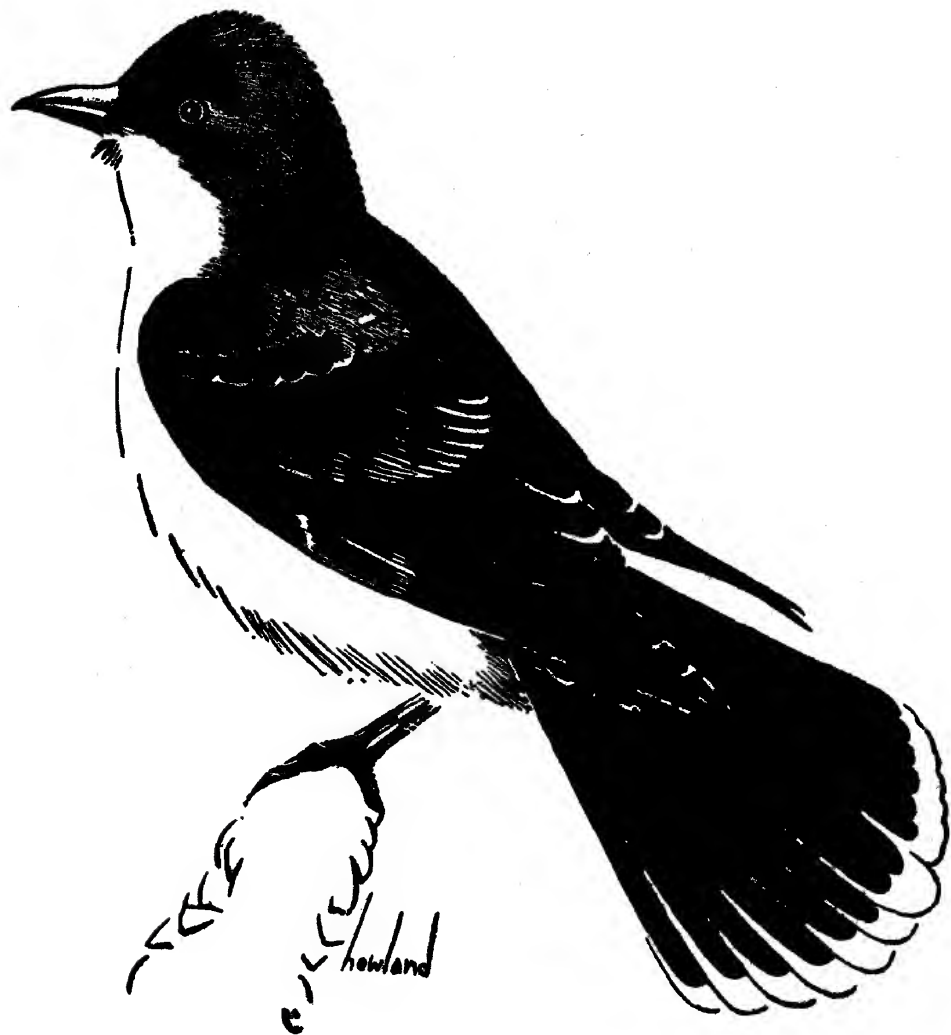


# *The* **KINGBIRD**



VOL. XV, NO. 2

MAY • 1965

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# The KINGBIRD

PUBLICATION OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.

Vol. XV No. 2

May, 1965

Pages 73-136

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PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEW YORK STATE RARITIES  
1. Boreal Owl



—Photo by Dr. A. A. Allen, Courtesy Bird Photographs Inc.

The Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) shown in the above photograph was discovered 17 March 1962 near Pulaski, by Margaret Rusk, as reported (together with a summary of ten previous New York State records) in the *Kingbird*, 12(1):25-26, May 1962. The photograph was taken by Dr. Arthur A. Allen the following day. The statement by Geoffrey Carleton (*Audubon Field Notes*, 16(3):315, June 1962) that the bird was "found dead" is an error. Since Rusk's account, one other Boreal Owl record from New York has been published: a bird seen and photographed 22 and 29 February 1964 in Hamlin State Park, Monroe County (J. Foster, *Kingbird*, 14(2):91-92, May 1964).

This is the first in a series of photographs of New York State rarities. The purpose of this series is twofold: to place on record those photographs that already exist, and to encourage the taking of such photographs in the future. It is not my intention here to discuss the pros and cons of collecting, but to point out that, in this day and age when the substantiation of a state record by a specimen is usually out of the question, photographs provide a satisfactory substitute. In fact, except possibly where subspecific identifi-



cation is desirable, photographs may be preferable. Specimens can be, and frequently have been, lost. Once a recognizable photograph has been published, however, it becomes a matter of public record.

Peter W. Post, 575 West 183 Street, New York 10033

#### 1965 BOREAL OWL RECORD



—Photo by Allen E. Kemnitzer

On February 24, 1965, Richard O'Hara and I observed a Boreal Owl (*Aegolius funereus*) perched in a huge tangle of wild grapevines located near the southern edge of the Lake Shore Golf Club. When first discovered, the owl was less than ten feet from the ground on the south side of the tangle, and in good light, only partly concealed by vines. It was possible to get an excellent close-up view of the Boreal Owl, revealing all the important field marks: the small size, the distinctive black facial framing, the white-spotted forehead, and the light-colored bill (see accompanying photograph).

This occurrence marks the second consecutive year that this species has been reported in Monroe County. Last year's Boreal Owl was first discovered on February 22, 1964, in Hamlin State Park, and observed for the last time, in the same location, a week later (*Kingbird*, 14(2):91-92, May 1964).

More than ten persons viewed this year's Boreal Owl at close range during the three-day period it was recorded. It was never seen to fly or move about, although its perching spot in the grapevine tangle varied from day to day. Throughout this time the owl exhibited its characteristic lack of fear of human beings, showed no alarm, and often closed its eyes in the presence of observers and photographers moving about less than six feet away.

This rare northern visitor was last seen late in the afternoon of February 26, during a heavy wind and snowstorm. The following morning, Saturday, brought out many birders but the owl had left the tangle. A thorough search of the surrounding area failed to turn up any further trace of the Boreal Owl.

*Allen E. Kemnitzer, 969 Five Mile Road, Webster 14580*

*Ed. Note:* This latest record and photograph of a Boreal Owl in New York State was received after the preceding article had been set in type.

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The Kingbird is a publication of The Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., which has been organized to further the study of bird life and to disseminate knowledge thereof, to educate the public in the need of conserving natural resources and to encourage the establishment and maintenance of sanctuaries and protected areas. Individual member's dues are **\$3.00** annually, of which \$2.75 is for a subscription to the Kingbird. A member wishing to make an additional contribution may become a Sustaining Member (\$5) a Supporting Member (\$10) or a Life Member (\$100—"payable over a four-year period in equal installments until the full amount is paid", if member so desires.) For all classes of membership contact the treasurer, Kenneth B. Niven, 61 Broadway, Monticello.

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**THE KINGBIRD** is published four times a year (January, May, July and October) by the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. Publication office is 419 Triphammer Rd., Ithaca, N. Y. Individual membership in the Federation is \$3.00 per year as of Jan. 1, 1962, of which \$2.75 is for a subscription to the Kingbird. Single copies: \$1.00.

APPLICATION for membership should be sent to the chairman of the membership committee, Alfred A. Starling, 75 Brooklawn Drive, Rochester 14618.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS is handled by the Treasurer, Kenneth D. Niven, 61 Broadway, Monticello. EXCHANGES, BACK COPIES, and REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGED COPIES by Walter L. Gillespie, Biology Department, Wells College, Aurora, N. Y. 13026.

Second class postage paid at Ithaca, N. Y.

## PRESIDENT'S PAGE

It is our hope that our Eighteenth Annual Meeting at Syracuse, June 11-13, will be our biggest and best ever. We hope that each of our 35 clubs will send their full complement of delegates, and that in addition, many of the individual members (and other friends and guests) of the Federation will join us for what is always an enjoyable and stimulating weekend. A fine program is planned and facilities are both excellent and reasonable in cost. Syracuse is as centrally-located a city as we can find, and this is our first visit there. Don't miss it!

In a recent letter from the President of one of our member clubs, the following question was asked, "What are we getting for our membership, besides our copy of the *Kingbird*?" Your President answered the question in roughly the following way:

"If you judge your support of the Federation and its work by what physical evidence you have in return, you are probably not getting every dollar's worth. But no educational, charitable, or conservation organization really provides a dollar's worth of chattel for every dollar contributed. What does one get back physically when one contributes to the Red Cross, the U.S.O., or the local hospital? We support them because we believe that these are worthy causes, and that by helping them, we benefit ourselves—and everyone.

"The Federation is a worthy cause. It was founded 18 years ago by a group of far-seeing birdwatchers and conservationists, to accomplish a multiple purpose. First, in the realm of conservation, it has given us a much stronger voice statewide, and provided statewide support to local organizations when they asked for it. With our present 35 clubs and 5,500 members we have a voice in Albany (and everywhere) far more powerful than any one club can produce. We have made our voice known in legislative matters with some success, and we are constantly alerted to new proposals—both helpful and dangerous, through our *Conservation Bulletins*.

"Second, in the realm of the gathering and exchange of information on New York State ornithology we are extremely active, as the ever-increasing value of *The Kingbird* will attest. We have brought birders together from the seven corners of the state at interesting annual meetings, where almost 200 papers on New York State ornithology have been given. We conduct statewide research projects like the annual Waterfowl Count, the Nesting Card program, and the gathering of data for the new state book. We have a going inter-club Bulletin Exchange program, and a State Ornithological Bibliography that is up-to-date. We are also, as you know, planning the publication of a major work, a new *Birds of New York State*, upon which thousands of hours of work have already been expended. All these valuable activities are the result of the volunteer services of many hard-working devoted people—officers, committee chairmen, and members. I

believe that they add up to something not merely of intangible worth, but something that has become indispensable to our state.

"So when you ask what you are getting from the Federation, I am tempted to paraphrase our late revered President Kennedy and say 'Ask not what your Federation can do for you . . . ' We are still young, much remains to be accomplished, and many improvements could be made. I can think of many myself, mostly dependent on getting *more people active*. I will welcome any and all from you . . . both ideas and service."

*Robert S. Arbib, Jr., 226 Guion Drive, Mamaroneck*

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## BIRTH OF A SANCTUARY

BETTY STRATH

Five miles north of the village of Odessa, N. Y., in Schuyler County, lies a narrow valley known by our ancestors as "Texas Hollow". In this "hollow", where Cranberry Creek ends and Texas Hollow Creek begins, is a large marsh surrounded by deep woods — the location of Texas Hollow Wildlife Sanctuary. This wild area has been known to hunters for many years, to local birders for comparatively few.

In 1962 Cotton-Hanlon, Inc., local lumber concern, purchased this land, adding to its millions of acres of timber. This presented a horrible picture to the Schuyler County Bird Club: visions of lumber crews crushing the beds of Pink Lady's Slippers, and chain saws ringing through the woods drowning out the jackhammer drilling and raucous laughter of the Pileated Woodpeckers. S.C.B.C. members snapped to attention. After a heated discussion, a committee was sent to Cotton-Hanlon to see whether anything could be done. They were curious, and a little fascinated by our idea of turning this 50 acres into a wildlife sanctuary and nature center, and although they would not sell the land (we had no money anyway), they were willing to lease at a most reasonable figure. Thus began Texas Hollow Wildlife Sanctuary.

For a sanctuary of its size, T.H.W.S. probably has as varied a habitat as could be found anywhere. Texas Hollow Creek begins in a marsh which was dammed by beaver to form a small lake full of dead snags, perfect for heron roosts, Wood Ducks, woodpeckers, Tree Swallows. This lake is surrounded by Alder thicket, ideal for warblers, Alder Flycatchers, Song Sparrows, Catbirds. There are both deciduous and Hemlock woods; there are two more ponds, one with a Sphagnum bog. Bird-life abounds. To date we have a checklist of 138 species, with 86 species known or surmised to nest within the boundaries.

In 1960, the beaver dam was washed out by heavy spring rains (the beaver had been gone for some time), and the lake became no more than a narrow winding stream through the marsh grass. The herons left, but rails came in! Soon after Cotton-Hanlon purchased this property, which borders on state-owned land, they signed an agreement with the Conservation Department to rebuild the marsh. It was quite a shock to walk in and see bulldozers baring the woods and the area around the lake. Now the dam is completed, the dike and spillways seeded, and in addition to having the lake back again, the seeded open area provides yet another habitat. The S.C.B.C. signed up with the local Soil & Water Conservation Service and acquired seedlings of Multiflora Rose, High Bush Cranberry, Autumn Olive, and honeysuckle, which were set out along the spillways.

Posted signs were donated and put up around the perimeter of the sanctuary. With clippers, brush cutter, and strong backs the remnants of the old trail and logging road were cleared. With the aid of a Senior Girl Scout Troop, tree labels were placed; a younger troop painted a trash barrel. The S.C.B.C. planned to celebrate its 50th Anniversary by

holding an "Open House" on October 11, 1964. A pole-frame was erected, over which was stretched a large tarpaulin to make a crude but practical "Hospitality Tent". Members with printing facilities donated programs. Sunday, October 11, was a typical October day, clear and crisp. Over 100 people of all ages visited Texas Hollow Wildlife Sanctuary, walked the trails, and joined us for cider, donuts and coffee.

The sanctuary is now open to the public. The Nature Trail leads from the open area through low deciduous woods (Aspen, Witch Hazel, etc.), into the climax forest of oak and other hardwoods, down a mossy glade into the deep Hemlock woods. On the left lies the small pond, known as "Turtle Pond" for its large population of Painted Turtles. On the right is the Sphagnum bog with its larger pond. There is no path onto the bog, but it is possible to get out there via a fallen log during drier seasons. It is full of Hemlock snags, Winterberry Holly, American Larch, Poison Sumac, head-high Royal and Cinnamon Ferns, Pitcher Plant, Sundew, Wild Flag, and other bog-loving plants, including a large patch of Cranberries. However, we try to discourage people from going onto the bog, as it is tricky (and sticky!) going and one slip could be disastrous. The trail winds around the bog pond, making a complete circle, coming back into the deciduous woods before ending only a few yards from where it started. The Conservation Department machinery has kept open a rough lane along the east side of the marsh where they have been doing more seeding and working on windrows. Eventually we hope to build a connecting spur from the Nature Trail and keep this as another permanent path. The bulldozers opened a spring in the blue clay on the north edge of the east spillway. This has been dug out and a crock inserted, and surrounded by flat stones. The water is clear, cold and pure — a handy drinking fountain.

Botanically, Texas Hollow Wildlife Sanctuary is rich, too. Other than the plants growing in the bog, we know of several species of wild orchids: Pink Lady's Slipper, Rattlesnake Orchis, Summer Coral Root, Autumn Ladies' Tresses, plus others we have been told about, but have yet to discover. Trailing Arbutus lines the path; Clintonia, Bellwort, Gay Wings (Fringed Polygala) and other spring plants flourish. Just south of the sanctuary is a patch of the comparatively rare White Gay Wings.

The eventual aim of the S.C.B.C. is to build and maintain a Nature Center with a small rustic building as headquarters. We will, of course, keep a checklist of birds, nesting and migrating, and nest records. We also plan to keep a list of plants growing there. A feeding station will be maintained.

There are many problems, of course, especially for a small club with an even smaller treasury. The two main difficulties are shortage of money and labor. We have been most fortunate in many ways: we receive free legal advice; Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg of Cornell's Laboratory of Ornithology has given us wonderful publicity on his radio program "Know Your Birds"; club members who publish the local shopping guide give free publicity; one club member is giving a program on the sanctuary, with color slides,

to local service organizations and donating any money received. The most rewarding result is the community interest which has been awakened. Formerly, the S.C.B.C. has been referred to locally with more or less tongue in cheek. Even sponsoring paid lectures with fine films has not been too successful in this area. Many of us feel that perhaps from now on the attitude will change — already club membership has increased. People are beginning to realize that those "silly bird watchers" are actually a group of conservation-minded people with our country's wildlife heritage in mind. Of course, the S.C.B.C. cannot take all the credit. The whole country's growing awareness of conservation problems as publicized through all media certainly is keeping the subject before the public. Also, we must give credit where it is due; if it weren't for Cotton-Hanlon, Inc., Texas Hollow Wildlife Sanctuary might never be! This, too, is a political feather in the cap for a large lumber concern. But in its small way, we feel that the S.C.B.C. is contributing by sponsoring this wildlife sanctuary.

The 35-member S.C.B.C. has proved one thing — it *can* be done! Bird clubs need such projects not only to stimulate club interest, but to bring recognition to themselves as working organizations. The size of the club is unimportant. All that is needed is leadership and willingness to work. The interest will take care of itself.

Odessa, N. Y. 14869

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### CLINTON HART MERRIAM

Clinton Hart Merriam was born in New York City on December 5, 1855. He attended Sheffield Scientific School at Yale and later the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City, from which he was graduated in 1879. Two of his classmates in medical school were A. K. Fisher and E. A. Mearns, both destined to become prominent in ornithology. For several years following graduation Dr. Merriam practiced at Locust Grove, a small community a few miles north of Boonville, N. Y. During this period he was active in field work in Lewis County and adjacent areas and contributed to the Nuttall Ornithological Club Bulletin.

Of major interest to us is Merriam's "Preliminary List of Birds Ascertained to Occur in the Adirondack Region, Northeastern New York." It appeared in the N.O.C. Bulletin, 1881-2 and the "Auk", Volume 1 (1884). This is an annotated list of 211 species with relative abundance indicated in most instances. The area covered is not clearly defined but it is evident that peripheral territory such as Lake George, the western border of Lake Champlain and the upper Black River Valley is included.

A few of the common names used by Merriam are quite unlike the ones we now know. For example his Grass Finch is our Vesper Sparrow, and the Little Blackhead turns out to be the Lesser Scaup. One species whose status has changed radically is the Raven. It is given as a "common resident throughout the Adirondacks". Merriam includes the Masked Duck (*Oxyura dominica*), stating that "Dr. Cabot found it on Lake Champlain." This species, however, is omitted from later New York State lists and it is

probable that the bird referred to was actually found on the Vermont side of the lake. In his brief introduction Merriam makes this observation in referring to the higher Adirondacks: "Birds of all kinds are rare in the dense evergreen forests of the Canadian Fauna. One may travel for hours, and sometimes a whole day, among the lonely mountains and scarcely see a single bird."

Mention should be made of an earlier paper which appeared in three parts in the N.O.C. Bulletin (1878-9) entitled, "Remarks on Some of the Birds of Lewis County, Northern N. Y." Four species are discussed at considerable length, viz. Loggerhead Shrike, Horned Lark, Red-headed Woodpecker and Yellow-bellied Sapsucker. On June 4, 1878 Merriam and C. L. Bragg found the first eggs of the Northern Three-toed Woodpecker (*Picoides tridactylus bacatus*) known to science. The nest was discovered near McKeever in the western Adirondacks. The two adult birds and four eggs were collected. This event is reported in the N.O.C. Bulletin, Volume III page 200.

In 1885 Dr. Merriam was appointed Chief of the U.S. Biological Survey which had just been established at Washington, D. C. This position he held for twenty-five years. During this period Merriam and his colleagues developed the "Life Zone" concept, preparing the well known map of North America which delineates biotic regions and zones.

Merriam was the first president of the Linnaean Society of New York which he helped to found while a medical student. He took an active part in organizing the American Ornithologists Union in 1883 and was elected the first secretary. He later was made president of that organization. He was affiliated with numerous scientific and learned societies. Dr. Merriam died in Berkeley, California March 19, 1942. A memorial biographical sketch of his life can be found in the "Auk", Volume 71, page 130 (April 1954).

*John B. Belknap, 92 Clinton Street, Gouverneur*

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Corrections or omissions should be called to the attention of the Bibliography committee: Sally Hoyt Spofford, Chairman, John B. Belknap, Allen H. Benton, and Kenneth C. Parkes.

# SUMMARY OF FRUIT CROP 1964

	Adirondacks	Ontario Lake Plain	Western Allegheny Plateau	Eastern Allegheny Plateau
Regions	5, 6	2, 6	1	3, 4, 5
White Pine	-, F		P	
Pitch Pine				
Larch	F, F			
White Spruce	-, G			
Black Spruce	P, G			
Red Spruce	F-G, -			
Balsam	-, F			
Hemlock			G	G, G, P
Arbor Vitae	-, F			
Red Cedar		F, F		
Bayberry				
Ironwood ( <i>Ostrya</i> )			F	-, G, F
Blue Beech ( <i>Carpinus</i> )			F	-, F, G
Yellow Birch			G	-, G, P
White Birch	-, G			-, G, -
Amer. Beech	F-G, G	P, G	F	F, P-G, F
White Oak		F, G	P	G, F, G
Red Oak			P	G, F, G
Cucumber Tree			G	-, F, -
Mountain Ash	G, G			
Thornapple		G, G	F	G, G, G
Wild Black Cherry	G, F		P	G, G, G
Box Elder		G, G	G	G, -, G
Sugar Maple			F	G, G, F
Grey Dogwood		G, G		
Red Osier Dogwood		F, G		
White Ash			F-G	G, G, G
Blackberried Elder		G, G	F	G, G, -

The fruit crop of wild trees and shrubs was reported to be generally fair to good on the Allegheny Plateau. Some evidence pointed to the area east of the Finger Lakes as producing a better crop than that part of the plateau to the west.

Fruits on the Ontario Lake Plain were considered good and in the Adirondacks the many conifers, beech and cherry all produced fair to good crops.

On the western Allegheny Plateau where Hemlock and Birch produced plentiful crops of seeds many Goldfinches were wintering.

From the Lower Hudson area it was felt drought conditions generally ruined the fruit and berry crop.

Thanks to H. S. Miller, S. Hoyt Spofford, L. E. Bemont, E. Ketchledge, F. A. Clinch and E. D. Treacy for helping with this summary.

Stephen W. Eaton, Dept. of Biology, St. Bonaventure Univ., St. Bonaventure

# NEST RECORD CARD PROGRAM — SECOND ANNUAL REPORT

DAVID B. PEAKALL

The second year's operation of the nest record card program yielded four times as many cards as the first year. This success led to the launching, in January 1965, of a continent-wide program to be run entirely by the Laboratory of Ornithology. This is, therefore, an appropriate time to thank the Onondaga Audubon Society for its financial support of the program during the first critical two years.

The basic idea of the program is the collection of information on the breeding biology of birds. Observers complete a simple card for every active nest found, giving the site, contents of nest at given dates etc. These cards are returned to the Laboratory of Ornithology for analysis. A more detailed account of the program has appeared previously in this journal (Vol. 13 pp 85-88, 1963).

The bulk of the cards received were from New York and Pennsylvania; however some cards were received from areas as far away as Florida and Minnesota. Also some cards were received which refer to previous years; the most notable in this category were a fine batch on Peregrine nests from Dr. Walter Spofford. This species may now be completely gone as a breeding species in the eastern United States. In all, some 5200 cards of 154 species are represented in the collection; those species for which ten or more cards are available are listed in Table 1.

Table 1.

Total number of cards received (1963-64) by species. Those represented by less than ten cards are excluded.

American Egret	10	Common Tern	22	Veery	12
Snowy Egret	14	Black Skimmer	11	Bluebird	359
Little Bl. Heron	12	Rock Dove	10	Cedar Waxwing	61
Green Heron	25	Mourning Dove	105	Starling	72
Black-crowned		Horned Owl	11	Red-eyed Vireo	16
Night Heron	11	Flicker	50	Yellow Warbler	94
Least Bittern	11	Kingbird	33	Chestnut-sided	
Glossy Ibis	15	Phoebe	467	Warbler	16
Canada Goose	10	Alder Flycatcher	26	House Sparrow	30
Mallard	44	Tree Swallow	241	Redwinged Blackbird	895
Black Duck	19	Rough-winged		Baltimore Oriole	39
Wood Duck	27	Swallow	10	Common Grackle	196
Goshawk	14	Barn Swallow	165	Cardinal	44
Red-tailed Hawk	21	Blue Jay	18	Rose-breasted	
Red-shouldered		Black-capped		Grosbeak	12
Hawk	25	Chickadee	21	Indigo Bunting	10
Osprey	10	House Wren	113	Goldfinch	62
Peregrine	57	Long-billed		Towhee	15
Sparrow Hawk	16	Marsh Wren	10	Slate-colored	
Ruffed Grouse	14	Catbird	206	Junco	27
Com'n Gallinule	26	Brown Thrasher	54	Chipping Sparrow	104
Killdeer	21	Robin	507	Field Sparrow	42
Woodcock	14	Wood Thrush	49	Song Sparrow	117

The success of this program is dependent on the co-operation of a large number of observers. It is in reality your program. Table 2 gives a list of contributors who sent in more than five cards. The increasing size of



the program makes complete listing impossible. Mr. Miller of Philadelphia heads the list this year with 489 cards covering a wide variety of species. Miss Bordner of State College, Pa., sent in 401 cards which were almost all of one species — the Poebe — and Mrs. Haller of Avon continued her work on the Red-winged Blackbird. To all contributors we extend our thanks and hope that they will continue to assist us in the future. Also, it is hoped that persons studying the breeding biology of birds will use the data collected by the program to supplement their own field observations.

Upstate Medical Center, 766 Irving Avenue, Syracuse 13210

Table 2.

List of persons contributing five or more nest record cards.

Ackley, Mrs W. D.	6	Knight, Mr and Mrs T. S.	65
Anderson, H. C.	52	Kopp, A. E.	6
		Krieg, D.	109
Bancroft, R. B.	16	Krieg, J.	90
Baxter, J. R.	5		
Belknap, J. B.	12	Marsi, Mrs H.	81
Bell, Barbara	6	Mason, D.	18
Benedict, Mr and Mrs R. J.	82	McIlroy, Mrs D.	10
Benning, W. E.	8	McMuller, Mrs E. D.	5
Bordner, Miss D. L.	401	Miller, J. C.	489
Bowman, M. C.	31	Moeller, R.	12
Brockner, W. W.	5		
Brooks, Bird Club	323	Newman, Mrs F.	73
Burgress, D. D.	64		
Bush, J. H.	6	O'Hara, R. T.	25
		Palmiter, M.	275
Carter, C.	23	Patterson, J.	28
Church, G.	8	Peakall, D.	6
		Phelps, S. B.	100
DeWitt, E.	87		
Dirig, R. E.	22	Ranson, Dr & Mrs F.	41
Ditterline, E.	190	Rew, Miss F. M.	9
Drouhard, C. P.	15	Robbins, Miss L.	15
		Rosche, R. C.	97
Evelien, A.	11	Rose, R. H.	6
		Rusk, Miss M.	10
Fagel, Mr and Mrs J. E.	5		
Fennell, W. G.	5	Schaeffer, F. S.	6
Finnegan, M. L.	5	Sheffield, Mr and Mrs R.	34
Flanigan, Annette	12	Sherman, Mr and Mrs N.	22
		Sinderson, S. W.	13
Germond, F.	13	Smiley, D.	9
Gerould, C.	18	Smith, G. M.	15
Goldman, H.	29	Smith, M. R.	39
Griffin, J.	5	Spies, C. & Morgan, S.	136
Gustafson, J. A.	9	Starr, Mrs E.	20
		Stocek, R. F.	62
Haller, Mrs J.	240		
Heath, F. & Zuppan, C.	82	Treatfis, C.	10
Hitman, B. A.	24		
Hoke, D.	8	Washburn, Dr. & Mrs N.	26
Hoyt, Dr. S. F.	23	Weske, J.	38
Hyde, D.	8	Williams, E.	21
		Williams, Mrs R.	6
Kendrick, N.	12	Wilson, S.	62
Ketcham, Mrs H. M.	27		
Knight, Mrs J.	8	Zimmer, G. M.	11

# FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS WATERFOWL CENSUS — JANUARY 9-17, 1965

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
Common Loon	1	—	4	3	1	—	—	—	—	54	63
Red-throated Loon	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6	7
Red-necked Grebe	—	—	3	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
Horned Grebe	4	3	216	—	14	—	—	—	—	355	592
Pied-billed Grebe	1	5	8	—	2	—	—	—	6	12	34
Mute Swan	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	3	426	436
Whistling Swan	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Canada Goose	—	3	149	—	14	36	—	—	9	766	977
Brant	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12055	12055
Snow Goose	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	3	4
Mallard	1119	135	2491	346	450	20	—	—	757	4058	9376
Black Duck	1670	36	1978	209	901	222	—	—	391	16973	23380
Gadwall	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	112	113
Pintail	39	2	1	2	5	—	—	—	—	145	194
Green-winged Teal	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	1	113	117
European Widgeon	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
American Widgeon	85	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	1941	2042
Shoveler	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	33	37
Wood Duck	2	1	2	1	1	—	—	—	1	19	26
Redhead	153	139	8841	150	203	4	—	—	7	41	9538
Ring-necked Duck	1	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	158	478
Canvasback	2721	467	2744	1	87	1	—	—	299	4205	10407
Scaup	2662	430	1706	5	1690	1019	—	—	181	77634	85154
Goldeneye	6117	3302	1044	23	2899	922	—	—	171	4571	19049
Barrows Goldeneye	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Bufflehead	270	228	354	—	110	25	—	—	29	1962	2978
Old Squaw	989	6949	24	—	410	22	—	—	1	582	8977
Common Eider	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	16
King Eider	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	3
White-winged Scoter	94	1107	1	—	47	2	—	—	—	6149	7400
Surf Scoter	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	809	809
Common Scoter	2	7	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	254	264
Ruddy Duck	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	107	96	204
Hooded Merganser	3	7	12	—	11	9	—	—	13	226	281
Common Merganser	8220	111	155	54	3068	407	1	—	106	85	12207
Red-breasted Merganser	77	16	71	—	50	—	—	—	—	1924	2138
Coot	—	4	262	—	5	—	—	—	107	358	736
Unidentified	150	225	2	21	—	130	—	—	—	100	628
Total	24386	13178	20091	816	9979	2819	1	—	2217	136244	209731

**N.Y. STATE CONSERVATION DEPT. AERIAL WATERFOWL SURVEY — JANUARY 1965**

<b>Within Region</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10A</b>	<b>10B</b>	<b>Total</b>
Geese -----	35	—	37	8	247	—	—	—	513	2215	3055
Brant -----	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6450	6450
Mallard -----	413	86	818	143	423	35	53	53	280	4959	7263
Black Duck -----	1163	460	1423	396	1362	313	910	378	2480	22132	31017
Gadwall -----	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	8
Am. Widgeon -----	50	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	555	2089	2694
Wood Duck -----	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2
Redhead -----	—	260	5420	245	—	—	—	—	—	25	5950
Canvasback -----	2175	395	935	130	—	300	—	160	780	2941	7816
Scaup -----	3500	465	2980	632	2547	2005	—	3	44245	64920	121297
Goldeneye -----	6265	785	945	1142	3027	1135	—	55	615	11484	25453
Bufflehead -----	11	21	32	—	—	40	—	—	245	1871	2220
Old Squaw -----	90	90	4	10	186	—	—	—	2	408	790
Scoters -----	—	300	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4591	4891
Ruddy Duck -----	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	975	975
Mergansers -----	13960	113	323	59	1317	1187	—	38	200	4970	22167
Coot -----	—	—	60	—	—	—	—	—	—	275	335
Unidentified -----	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	300	300
<b>Total -----</b>	<b>27662</b>	<b>2975</b>	<b>12977</b>	<b>2765</b>	<b>9109</b>	<b>5015</b>	<b>963</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>49915</b>	<b>130615</b>	<b>242683</b>

Waterfowl census summary compiled by John L. Mitchell, 345 Conrad Avenue, Rochester

## SURVEY OF HERONRIES IN UPSTATE NEW YORK — 1964

A survey is being made to determine the present breeding status of herons in the State and, by continued reports over a period of years, to ascertain whether the heron population is decreasing. In view of the suspected damage done by DDT and other chemicals, particularly to fish-eating birds like herons, this information may become quite significant.

In the spring of 1964 a request was sent to each of the Bird Clubs in the State that all heronries in the Club's area be checked during the breeding season and a report forwarded to the writer giving the location of each herony, the number of active nests and the breeding success in 1964. After undertaking the survey, it was found that the nesting of herons on Long Island was already being well documented. This, plus the fact that all the reports from the upstate area dealt with the Great Blue Heron while the herons breeding on Long Island are largely of other species, has led me to limit this report to Upstate New York.

The reports received by Regions are as follows:

### Region 1

- 1) 4 mi. NNW of Vanadlia, Cattaraugus Co.  
19 nests — see **Kingbird** 14(4):220

### Region 2

- 2) Near Savannah, Wayne Co. (George Vanderbilt Swamp)  
About 150 nests  
Abandoned in 1964. Studied and photographed in 1963 —  
see **The Conservationist**, April 1964
- 3) 4 mi. S of Clyde, Wayne Co. (Marengo Swamp on Joel Thorn farm)  
65 nests  
Visited by the writer on June 6, 1964 at which time at least 40 nests were active, 1 to 3 young per nest. Mr. Thorn felt that there was an increase in active nests in 1964, perhaps reflecting a transfer of some birds from the Vanderbilt herony 10 miles east.

### Region 3

Ithaca area — no active heronries presently known; two (W of Spencer and S of Caroline) active within the past 5 years now abandoned  
Keuka Park area — Keuka Pk. Conservation Club reported no known heronries

### Region 4

- 4) 3 mi. E of Whitney Point, Broome Co. (Robert Taylor farm)  
60-70 nests scattered in 3 locations about 1000 ft. apart
- 5) Near German, Chenango Co.  
Colony size not specified — reported by Dr. Charles R. Leahy
- 6) Near Candor, Tioga Co.  
20 nests spread over large area  
15 nests active. Great Horned Owl used one of the others.
- 7) Near Owego, Tioga Co.  
Referred to in **Kingbird** 14(3):166
- 8) Near Scott, Cortland Co.  
17 nests — referred to in **Kingbird** 14(3):166
- 9) Near Charlotteville, Otsego-Schoharie Co. line  
Referred to in **Kingbird** 14(4):225

#### **Region 5**

- 10) Cross Lake, Onondaga Co.  
65 to 75 nests  
Aerial survey by W. R. Spofford, 30 June 1964, estimated 80-90% of nests with 1 or more young.
- 11) Near Phoenix, Oswego Co. (Scott Swamp)  
Approximately 15 nests  
Scanned March 1964 by W. R. Spofford and M. Rusk, at least several nests occupied.

#### **Region 6**

- 12) Old Ironsides Island, St. Lawrence River near Alexandria Bay  
At least 150 nests  
Visited by Miss Gertrude Houghton and Mr. & Mrs. Austin A. Stevens, 9 July 1964, 130-140 active nests, 1 or 2 young in each.
- 13) 9 mi N of Watertown, Jefferson Co. (Perch River Game Management Area)  
Size not reported  
Frank A. Clinch reported more nests than last year.
- 14) Near Camp Drum, Jefferson Co.  
No details available — reported by Frank Clinch

#### **Regions 7 and 8 — no reports received**

#### **Region 9**

- 15) On Jesse Bentecue farm, Town of Washington, Dutchess Co.  
9 nests  
Florence Germond reported 7 active, 2-4 young in each.
- 16) Near Bellvale, Orange Co. (Charles T. Wallace farm)  
40 nests  
Martha Earl reported it was abandoned in 1964.

West Nyack area — Rockland Audubon Soc. reported no known heronries.

One year's survey can do little more than locate some of the heronries and establish their size in 1964. I wish to thank all those who contributed in any way to this effort, and trust that you will be willing to continue to report on these heronries and any additional ones in coming breeding seasons. A continuing survey over several years can show whether the Great Blue Heron population is maintaining its numbers or declining. I solicit reports from other individuals or Clubs in order to make the survey as comprehensive as possible.

In checking the locations of the heronries mentioned in this report, one interesting fact emerges. If a line is drawn north and south across the State through Binghamton, Syracuse and Watertown, all but 4 of the 14 active heronries reported are within 20 miles of this line, and one of these 4 is only 40 miles west of Syracuse. Are the bulk of the Great Blue heronries actually within this narrow belt, and if so, why? Or is it just a coincidence that the heronries reported lie along this line and are there in reality many others in other parts of the State? Perhaps future reports will shed further light on this interesting distribution.

Walter E. Benning, RD #1, Clyde 14433



## CONSERVATION NEWS

MAXWELL C. WHEAT, JR.

If you have felt uncomfortable with that appellation "bird watcher", but embarrassed to admit it, you can now replace this label with no apologies. It's out of date. Today many more persons are watching birds closely; the more precise yet all-inclusive term would be "bird observer".

"To see, perceive or notice", one set of meanings for *observe* in the dictionary, would encompass those who notice and watch — those who will joyfully keep eyes focused through a kitchen window on a Chickadee hanging upside down on a piece of suet, or who will stand on a beach entranced at a flock of Tree Swallows pirouetting against the backdrop of a late summer sky. Others might whip out notebooks to record how long a Chickadee maintains that skyward view of his repast or how many swallows are in the flock. "To watch, view or note for some scientific, official or other special purpose", says the dictionary, thus embracing the growing numbers of note takers and census takers in birding ("birding" which can become synonymous with bird observing as "birders" can become synonymous with bird observers).

Closer watching and counting of birds is increasing, largely because of appeals for the quantity of information that only myriads of amateur bird observers can provide. In particular demand are observations and counts of breeding birds. Last year Walter E. Benning, R.D. #1, Clyde, asked Federation members for the location of heronries and figures of active nests. Such compilations might substantiate reports that Great Blue Heron populations are down — for which pesticides have been suspect. Two young observers in the Linnaean Society of New York have been giving informative "pep" talks urging bird observers to take breeding bird censuses. Jeffrey Zupan and Fred Heath in the *Linnaean News-Letter* (Feb. 1965) wrote that "The cause of conservation can often be positively advanced with the aid of definite quantitative material . . ." For example, it is one thing to claim that breeding birds have decreased in a wooded, swampy portion of a New York City park because of the Park Department's bulldozing and paving. It is something else to be able to report, as these two breeding-bird census takers can, that in 1962 there were 29 nesting species, but that only 5 can be expected this year. If this prediction is close to the 1965 census figures, the claim against the Park Department will have effective substantiation.

The Federation can "observe" with pride that a nest-record card program successfully conducted by one of its clubs was put on a nation-wide basis last January by the Laboratory of Ornithology, Cornell University. The Onondaga Audubon Society and Dr. David Peakall have been working with the Laboratory for the past two years on this effort. Observations on nest sites, heights from ground, hatching success, etc., are recorded on cards provided by the Laboratory. "Everyone", says the Laboratory, "seriously interested in birds can participate, whether a seasoned nest finder or one who merely watches a nest from a window."

Let the Federation, already a leader in conservation, become a leader in cooperating with the breeding heron counts requested by Walter Benning; in conducting breeding bird censuses as advocated by the two young New York observers; in finding nests and reporting data about them as urged by the Laboratory of Ornithology. You will be putting figures and documentation in the pens and speeches of conservationists.

This is a country where everyone is from one state — Missouri. "I'm from Missouri. Show me! So you say there aren't so many robins around this town since we've been sprayin' for mosquitoes. What figures have you got to prove it?" Through these data compilation programs you can help conservationists "show" the public.

We have to help because too often the necessary research has been neglected — brushed aside, I would suggest — by a chemical manufacturer with a potent new pesticide that will meet public demand for backyard relief from mosquitoes, or by a huge power company or other industrial giant making more "progress" to meet a "public need". Nowhere can that "bull in a china closet" phrase be better applied than to an industrial Paul Bunyan in the wild. It is not only the industries that can be blamed, but often the government agencies that give them license.

For example, conservation experts have asked for three years to study the ecology of the Hudson River to determine what effect a new power plant there might have on the fish — and on fishing. No. The Federal Power Commission bluntly, by a 3 to 1 decision, told Consolidated Edison Power Company to go ahead with its multi-million dollar (there's something magical about millions of dollars) power plant at scenic Storm King Mountain on the Hudson. Belatedly the company offered research funds to study the possible effect on fish. But if the findings were adverse, would it be realistic to expect the company to abandon such a gigantic project?

Perhaps this will be an instance when powerful federal agency formidability and multi-million dollar aura have been pushed too far. What right, people are asking, has the Federal Power Commission to rule on the fate of fish and fishing or the disposition of natural resources — for that, in effect, was what it was doing when it approved the Storm King plant. Congressional hearings were scheduled to get underway this spring by the Fisheries and Wildlife Subcommittee of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee to investigate the FPC's licensing of this plant. Bills to create a Hudson Highlands Scenic Riverway have been introduced in Congress. Citizens are being urged to write asking Secretary Udall to assert his Department's right to have some authoritative say about such scenic and conservation resources. Legal action is also being instituted to reverse the decision that would otherwise be final.

Leading and coordinating the fight by the public is the Scenic Hudson Preservation Conference whose honorary chairman is the New York State enthusiast and writer, Carl Carmer. Contributions to finance the fight are being sought. Five dollars will pay for a membership in this organization located at 205 East 42nd Street, Room 318, New York, N. Y. 10017.

333 Bedell Street, Freeport, L. I.

## FIELD NOTES

**Bluebird Nest Box Project in Dutchess County:** In 1962 a Bluebird housing project was started by the Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, one member putting up 20 houses in March. One pair of Bluebirds nested and brought off two broods.

In 1963, 13 more houses were put out, this time farther from human habitation, and in more carefully selected localities. Bluebirds used 6 boxes, with approximately 20 young fledged.

In 1964, 16 new boxes were placed in those locations which had been most successful in 1963. Of 42 houses now available, 20 were used by Bluebirds. Five pairs raised second broods, and the young totalled 112, of which 47 were banded by Thelma Haight. Of the 22 remaining boxes, 16 were occupied by Tree Swallows, 3 by House Wrens, 1 by House Sparrows, 1 was unoccupied, and 2 contained dead Tree Swallows.

Mrs. Homer Germond, Shunpike, Clinton Corners

**Cedar Waxwing with a Red Tail-band:** On 1 November 1964, I observed a flock of six Cedar Waxwings (*Bombycilla cedrorum*) feeding on the berries of a Mountain Ash, which is about twenty feet from my window. While watching them, I noted one bird had a bright red or scarlet band on the tip of the tail feathers instead of the usual yellow or orange. The time was near noon on a bright sunny day, so there was no mistaking this unusual color. The bird with the red band was the same size and had the other markings similar to the rest of the flock and did not resemble the Bohemian Waxwing (*B. garrula*).

Margaret Cornwell, 8 Henfling Road, Scarsdale

**Note:** This observation is of interest as *B. japonicus*, the waxwing found in Japan, northern China, and Siberia, has a bright red tailband.

An examination of approximately 480 Cedar Waxwing specimens in the American Museum of Natural History shows that, occasionally, the shafts of the tail feathers will be red, terminating in a "drop of wax" as on the wing. None of the specimens exhibit red instead of the usual yellow on the tail feathers. The closest approximation to this condition was one individual which had the yellow of two of the tail feathers replaced by an orange wash.

Peter W. Post, 575 West 183 Street, New York, N. Y. 10033

**Fall Feeding of Pileated Woodpecker:** On October 19, 1964, at 4:00 P.M. EDT, I watched a Pileated Woodpecker feeding on the fruits of the Frost Grape (*Vitis vulpina*). The interval was over a twenty-minute period, during which the bird hopped about over the vines which grew over the shrubs and herb growth in an open woodland in Central Park, Schenectady. While feeding and climbing surrounding saplings, the bird cackled constantly.

Russell W. Carter, Curator of Natural Science, Schenectady Museum Association, 37 Steuben Street, Schenectady

**Ed. Note:** In the fall, the Pileated Woodpecker frequently adds fruits and mast to its diet. Several species of wild grapes, chokecherries, fruits of Virginia Creeper and Poison Ivy all seem to be relished, but there are not many published accounts of observations of this type of feeding.

**Notes on Winter Owls in Northern New York:** On December 24, 1964 Frank Clinch and I were called to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Gorgen in Black River village to identify a Hawk Owl (*Surnia ulula*) in their backyard. While we were there we watched it catch a field mouse, return to a low tree limb and consume it head first. Some pictures were taken. I saw it again on January 2, 1965 perched on a roof antenna of Pine Lodge in Black River.



Two Hawk Owls seen by the writer and others and previously reported in this publication were one from Dec. 11, 1958 to Jan. 1, 1959 at 3 mi. NE Three Mile Bay, Jeff Co. and one on Feb. 9, 1963 at 1½ mi. E of Sears Pond on Tug Hill in Lewis Co. Both were in treetops. (Note by Dr. Walter Spofford: Other observers seeing the 1958 bird noted that it sometimes perched close to the trunk halfway up in trees, unusual behavior for this species.)

Probably individuals of this species regularly visit the area but are not reported by competent observers.

On Jan. 1, 1965 at 4 P.M. EST as the sun was getting low, I saw a Short-eared Owl (*Asio flammeus*) make repeated harrassing dives on a red fox in an open field on Pt. Peninsula. The fox made no attempt to fight back but was crossing the field to get to some trees. The owl did not seem to strike the fox. Two more Short-eared Owls came over this field to join the first in a few minutes. At dusk, 4:55 P.M. EST, I saw three different Short-eared Owls flying around a barn on Pillar Point several miles away on the same date.

David C. Gordon, 1347 Sherman Street, Watertown

**Gyr Falcon in Jefferson County:** On Dec. 23, 1964 I saw a dark phase Gyr Falcon (*Falco rusticolus*) sitting on a telephone pole on the Dablon Pt. Road near Cape Vincent, Jeff. Co., and observed it from about 11:00 to 11:30 A.M. EST at close range. It greatly resembled a dark phase Rough-legged Hawk until it flew, but lacked any white on the tail and the flight was quite different. I had to shout and clap to make it fly the first time. I followed it from one pole to another several times in my car and could drive up beside it or past it without disturbing it. Only when I approached near on foot would it fly. Then it flew low over the ground with a steady, deceptively slow, gull-like beat — never soaring or hovering — before it flew up to its next perch. Once I saw it fly to the ground and walk around.

Frank Clinch and I located it later in the afternoon in a tree and observed it for nearly another 30 minutes on poles and in other trees near Cape Vincent.

On Dec. 26, 1964 in the morning I saw a black Gyr Falcon on Pt. Peninsula in a tree and later on a telephone pole beside the road. Although it looked like the first one I saw, I suspect it may have been a different bird.

All markings and other characteristics, which were noted at close range, have been compared satisfactorily with several of the most authoritative books on birds of prey.

David C. Gordon, 1347 Sherman Street, Watertown

**An Albino Horned Grebe:** In early February 1965 Walter Friton photographed a pure white bird from the West End Jetty at Jones Beach, Nassau County. He thought he detected a red eye and although he was in doubt as to the species he felt it was a Horned Grebe (*Podiceps auritus*), even though it seemed smaller than other grebes in the inlet.

Walter Friton, William Hackett and I observed the bird on February 23 and 26. The possibility occurred to us that it might be a Black Guillemot (*Cepphus grylle*), but choppy water, distance, and the wariness of the bird prevented our seeing it well or securing a photograph.

Returning to the inlet on 8 March, we spotted a group of Horned Grebes (about 24) in a compact flock and there, on the outside of the group, was the white bird. We tried to photograph it, but as we attempted to get nearer, it dove and reappeared on the far side of the group. As we advanced, it was the only bird to swim away, the others appearing unconcerned over our presence. This time the typical Horned Grebe shape of the head and thin neck were very apparent, and the bird's plumage, which a few weeks previously was totally white, was now streaked on the back and sides with buff.

Daniel Rafferty, 2307 Loring Place, Bronx 10468

**Note:** This bird was seen by several other observers, all of whom agreed as to the identification. In a recent review of albinism in grebes, Weller (*Auk*, 76:520-521, 1959) could find only two reports of albino Horned Grebes, both partial albinos. I am indebted to C. Chandler Ross, who has made an extensive search for albino birds in the literature and among museum specimens, for this reference. That albinism may often be correlated with differences in size and behavior is well known (see Lee and Keeler, *Auk*, 68:80-85, 1951). P. W. Post

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE WINTER SEASON DECEMBER 1 - MARCH 31

DAVID B. PEAKALL

It was the worst winter for northern finches since 1956/57; most areas had to be content with a few Evening Grosbeaks and Purple Finches. Although the number of Purple Finches increased in late winter they did not approach flight proportions. Several regional editors considered that other passerine species were low in numbers including the Tree Sparrow. Passerine species reported in above average numbers were Cedar Waxwing, Northern Shrike and Goldfinch. In the Adirondacks the Goldfinch was the finch of the period. Although Bohemian Waxwings associate with flocks of Cedar Waxwings it is of some interest that only two were reported this winter.

The invasion of Snowy Owls which followed the four year rule, was fair to good. In most areas it did not reach the proportions of the 1960/61 flight. A detailed account will be published later. In many areas the fine fall flight of Rough-legged Hawks did not result in particularly high wintering populations; local upstate exceptions were the Lyndonville area of Region 1 and Albany-Catskill in Region 8. However, on Long Island the numbers recorded were considered to be the highest ever. The highlight of winter records of birds-of-prey was the occurrence of four gyrfalcons. One is detailed in the field note section. The scarcity of accipiters was again widely commented on.

Several areas reported high counts of Great Black-backed Gulls; on Long Island a new record high Christmas count was made and numbers on the Upper Hudson were considered "unprecedented". This species has been increasingly steadily over the last few decades. In the Great Lakes the species was virtually unknown until the mid 1930's. The average counts for those Christmas counts carried out regularly over the last twenty years are given in the table below. The Ring-billed Gull has also increased as a wintering species. There are considerable difficulties in comparing counts due to increasing coverage and more and better observers. However, the numbers of Herring Gulls reported have not significantly increased over the same period.

	1964-60	1959-55	1954-50	1949-45
Great Black-backed				
Long Island & New York City	590	354	214	71
Great Lakes	99	51	42	24
Ring-billed				
Long Island & New York City	605	239	222	44
Great Lakes	2652	2332	1068	325



The increase of the Mourning Dove as a wintering bird and the increase of the introduced House Finch have been chronicled in these summaries fairly recently. The number of Mourning Doves reported on the 1963/64 Christmas counts was 3533 from 44 counts compared to 2560 from 41 two years before. The average number for regular counts (see *Kingbird* 13(2):99) were Long Island 139 (compared to 118) and upstate 83 (compared to 31). A further northward expansion of the House Finch is recorded in the Hudson Valley and there was a large increase in the numbers recorded on the Christmas counts on Long Island.

There were, at least, as many rarities as normal. Among these may be noted a Boreal Owl at Rochester, Lesser Black-backed Gull at Ithaca and Elmira, two Harris' Sparrows in Region 8, Varied Thrush and Lark Sparrow in the Hudson Valley, and Brambling and Spotted Towhee on Long Island.

*Upstate Medical Center, 766 Irving Avenue, Syracuse*

It is regretted that the report from Region 4 was not received in time to be used in this summary.

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## REGION 1 — NIAGARA FRONTIER

RICHARD C. ROSCHE

Winter in the Niagara Frontier was relatively mild during December, January and February. Long periods of cold temperatures were the exception and snowfall was erratic. There were many periods when the ground was mostly snow free. However, the weather pattern reversed in March; there was much cold weather, and snow accumulated to depths greater than in any other part of the winter.

The continuation of mild fall weather into early winter, combined with an excellent available food supply, apparently induced large numbers of blackbirds and sparrows to winter. To a lesser extent, the same might be said of some fruit-eating birds, like the Robin and Flicker. But the same abundance of available food must have also existed in the north country, for many typical winter birds, with the exception of those dependent on small mammals, were either very scarce or unreported.

Ice-free ponds, lakes and streams, especially in the southern tier, probably account for the number and variety of straggler waterfowl reported during December and early January. Likewise, the lack of open water during most of March resulted in an unusually poor waterfowl movement. The outlet of Chautauqua Lake provided habitat for more numbers and species of waterfowl than any other place in the Region, including the temporary sinks and ponds in the Oak Orchard area that were mostly frozen all month.

Most typical March migrant landbirds were about two weeks late in arriving in normal numbers. Several days during the first week were good for migration; however, it wasn't until March 26-28, and especially during the night of March 27-28, when large numbers of these birds moved into the Region.

It is always interesting to watch for the effects of man-made objects on the distribution and occurrence of birds. This winter, in order to stabilize ice in Lake Erie and prevent it from clogging water intakes in the Niagara River, an ice-boom was constructed from Buffalo to Fort Erie, Ontario where the river makes its exit from the lake. The engineers say it

was successful; there was almost no open water in eastern Lake Erie at the end of winter; and the Niagara River was relatively free from ice-jams during most of the winter. Naturally, field students were interested to see what effects, if any, this would have on wintering waterfowl. The only comments reaching the writer were that waterfowl seemed to be more scarce than in previous winters. However, it seems most likely that waterfowl were not concentrated in large numbers in open water areas, but because of the lack of large ice-jams, were relatively scattered in smaller groups. Observers who used their telescopes to look over the middle of the river, rather than concentrating on areas close to shore, reported what seem to be average numbers of ducks. Our Winter Waterfowl Count does not show any sharp reduction in numbers.

Highlights of the season include the first regional records of winter Dunlin and Common Tern; the occurrence of several rarities—Mute Swan, Bohemian Waxwing and Harris' Sparrow; and a moderate Snowy Owl flight. Negative aspects include an almost complete absence of winter finches, and lower numbers of some regular winter landbirds; a generally poor winter for feeding station operators; and most important of all . . . a question, "What is happening to some of the fish-eating birds that have always wintered in small numbers on the Niagara River?" (see below under Great Blue Heron and Belted Kingfisher)

Abbreviations used below are: ad—adult; Alleg—Allegany; BACC—Buffalo Audubon Society Christmas Count; BCC—Buffalo Ornithological Society Christmas Count; Bflo—Buffalo; Chaut—Chautauqua; Co—County; Gen—Genesee; imm—immature; ISP—Island State Park; JCC—Jamestown Audubon Society Christmas Count; Lk—Lake; max—maximum; NF—Niagara Falls; Nia—Niagara; OO—Oak Orchard; Ont—Ontario; opp—opposite; Pt—Point; R—River; SCC—Scio Christmas Count; TGMA—Tonawanda Game Management Area; WWC—Winter Waterfowl Count; yrs—years.

Contributors: RFA—Robert F. Andrie; HHA—Harold H. Axtell; CMB—Clarence M. Beal; AHB—Allen H. Benton; TLB—Thomas L. Bourne; WWB—Winston W. Brockner; RB—Richard Brownstein; GB—George Buckland; LDB—Lou and Doris Burton; AC—Arthur Clark; WC—Wilma Csonat; FD—Mrs. Fred Danner; MME—Mary Louise and Marjorie Emerson; AF—Arthur Freitag; GH—Mrs. George Hartloff; LJ—Mrs. John Jacoby; LK—Lewis Kibler; WHK—Walter and Harriette Klabunde; WK—Ward Klepfer; OM—Ollie Meddaugh; HDM—Harold D. Mitchell; CN—Mr. and Mrs. Charles Neel; RLN—Royce and Lillian Norton; EO—Edwin Olmstead; EMP—Elizabeth Pillsbury; FMR—Frances M. Rew; RCR—Richard C. Rosche; CAR—Clarence and Arlene Rote; DS—Daniel Salisbury; HCS—Mrs. Harry C. Schafer; ELS—Edward L. Seeber; WGS—William A. and George M. Smith; RLS—Robert L. Sommerville; KOS—Kenneth and Ora Swanson; AEU—Alice and Edward Ulrich; GGW—Gertrude G. Webster.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: one, Jan 10, Rushford Lk (LDB)—very late inland record. Pied-billed Grebe: only wintering bird reported from upper Gen R, Alleg Co (LDB). Double-crested Cormorant: one, Jan 1 (AHB et al); one, Jan 3 (WWB et al); one, Jan 9 (FMR et al), Dunkirk Harbor. Great Blue Heron: none wintered in Nia R area for second consecutive year; Dec and Jan records of single birds at Olean and Scio; first migrants Mar 28. Black-crowned Night Heron: no reports. American Bittern: one, Dec 10, Belmont (LDB et al)—late (died Dec 11—specimen now in Bflo Museum of Science). **Mute Swan:** three, Feb 27, mouth of OO Creek at Pt Breeze, Orleans Co (RB et al)—apparently feral birds; reported by many observers from mid Jan to late Mar. Whistling Swan: five, Dec 27, Chaut Lk (JCC); 18, Dec 31, Chaut Lk at Stowe (CMB et al); five, Jan 21, Dunkirk Harbor (EMP); one imm wintered Feb 1-Mar 17 on

Nia R opp Bflo (RLS); first migrant Mar 14, Beaver ISP (AF); noticeable flights Mar 22 (66, Chaut Lk Outlet, CMB; 21, over Hamburg, RCR; 22, over Bflo, HHA) and Mar 28 (40, over Hamburg, TLB; 12, Buckhorn ISP, WK); max 76-85, Mar 24-28, Chaut Lk Outlet (CMB et al). Canada Goose: first migrants Feb 20, Dunkirk Harbor (EMP et al) and Mar 3, Lyndonville (WGS); few reports of overhead migrants; max counts in OO area—1500 on Mar 7 (RCR et al), 3500 on Mar 14 (RCR et al) and 7000 on Mar 31 (HHA et al)—fewer than in most recent years. Blue Goose: one, Mar 17, Eden (TLB); one, Mar 31, TGMA (HHA et al)—only reports.

Mallard: highest count (1119) in 11 yrs (WWC). Gadwall: one, Jan 10 (LK et al); one, Feb 6 (FMR et al); three, Feb 11 (RB), Dunkirk Harbor. Pintail: highest count (39) in 11 yrs (WWC)—25 of these were in OO area (OM); peaked at TGMA on Mar 14, 850 (RCR et al). Green-winged Teal: five, Dec 18, Belmont (LDB)—latest Regional report and especially late for southern tier. Blue-winged Teal: two, Mar 27, Belfast (LDB)—first migrants. American Widgeon: highest count (85) in 11 yrs (WWC)—79 of these were at NF; unusually scarce during Mar. Shoveler: one male, Dec 13, West Branch Nia R (FMR, RCR et al)—late; four, Mar 29, Frewsburg (CMB)—first migrants. Wood Duck: single birds reported Jan 10 with Mallards and Black Ducks at Forest Lawn, Bflo (AF) and at Williamsville (HHA); three, Mar 25, Chaut Lk Outlet (CMB)—first migrants. Redhead: best Mar flight in past five or more years—max 152, Mar 11, Nia R (HDM), 350, Mar 25, Chaut Lk Outlet (CMB) and 100, Mar 25, Nia R opp Bflo (HHA). Canvasback: lowest count (2721) since 1959 (WWC). Lesser Scaup: no wintering birds; 35, Mar 25, Chaut Lk Outlet (CMB)—first migrants. King Eider: one, Dec 27, gorge at NF (BCC); one, Jan 10, Lk Ont between Fort Nia and Olcott (HHA et al). White-winged Scoter: more wintering than usual; max—65, Jan 5, Nia R opp Bflo (RFA et al) and 94, Jan 10 (WWC) of which 81 were on Lk Ont between Olcott and Pt Breeze (WHK); highest count on WWC since 1955; one, Mar 25, Chaut Lk Outlet (CMB). Ruddy Duck: three, Jan 3, Chaut Lk (KOS)—last report; no Mar migrants. Common Merganser: highest count (8220) since 1960 when 15192 were estimated (WWC).

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: one-two, Mar 28, OO area (DS et al) first migrants. Hawk migration: Mar 18 over south shore Lk Erie at Irving (CN)—Sharp-shinned-2, Red-tailed-29, Red-shouldered-6, Rough-legged-2, Sparrow-1, unidentified-14—total-54 birds; no other hawk movements reported. Goshawk: one ad, Jan 8, Lake View (TLB). Sharp-shinned and Cooper's Hawks: except for the last half of Mar when migrants appeared, there were more winter observations of Sharp-shinned than Cooper's—an interesting situation because the Cooper's has always been thought to be more common in winter than the Sharp-shinned. Outside of peak migration periods the Cooper's seems to be decreasing in the Region. Red-tailed Hawk: none reported on any of the southern tier Christmas Counts. Red-Shouldered Hawk: one ad, Dec 12, near East Aurora (RCR et al)—latest; one, Mar 2, Hamburg (TLB)—first migrant; none wintered for the second consecutive year. Rough-legged Hawk: fairly well distributed after Dec in very small numbers except on Ont Plain in Lyndonville area where max of 14-Dec 29, 24-Jan 1 and 21, and 1-23, Mar 1-31 were counted (WGS). Bald Eagle: one imm, Dec 19, Hamburg (TLB); one imm, Feb 9, 11, 14, Nia R in vicinity of Navy Island (GGW et al); one ad, Feb 12, Orchard Park (TLB); one imm, Mar 24, over Hamburg (TLB); one in almost ad plumage, Mar 25, Beaver ISP (AF). Marsh Hawk: scattered reports of wintering birds; most regularly reported in Lyndonville-Shadigee area (WGS) where Rough-legs occurred with max of 8, Mar 14 (RCR et al). Bobwhite: pair, Mar 27, near Alabama (RCR et al)—probably birds released in area last fall. Turkey: fewer southern tier reports than usual; their continued northward spread into Erie Co is borne out by two observations—one, Mar



13, near Chestnut Ridge Park and two, Mar 25, Newton Road, Hamburg (TLB). American Coot: two, Jan 21 (EMP) and one, Feb 6 (FMR et al), Dunkirk Harbor—the most regular wintering locality in recent years.

Killdeer: late birds Dec 20 at Grand Island (GGW et al), Dec 29 at Cuba (LDB), Jan 3 at Chaut Lk (KOS); first migrant Mar 4 at Marila (HCS); major influx occurred over the night of Mar 27-28. **Dunlin:** two, Feb 6 (FMR et al) and one, Feb 28 (AC et al), Dunkirk Harbor—first reports of wintering birds for the Region. Glaucous Gull: scarce during most of Dec, Feb and Mar but perhaps more numerous than usual in late Dec and Jan on Nia R; max seven, Dec 27, NF area (ELS et al) and eight, Jan 17 Lewiston-Queenston area (FMR et al). Iceland Gull: few reports in Dec, Feb and Mar but a count of 12, Jan 9 (WHK) on the Nia R between NF and Lewiston is the highest ever seen in the Region in a single day; other observers reported fewer numbers in this area in mid Jan but most agreed that this bird was more numerous than usual. Iceland Gull (*L.g.kumlieni*): one, Dec 27, NF area (ELS et al). Great Black-backed Gull: commenting on the results of the BCC in the Nia R region, Whitney Mallam stated, "(The) Great Black-backed Gull shows the most striking constant rise in numbers of any count species. Prior to 1959 there were never over 100 reported, yet this is the fifth year of the last six when over 100 were reported and the second consecutive year when over 200 were recorded." 237 were counted. Franklin's Gull: one, Dec 6, NF (DS et al)—late. Bonaparte's Gull: none wintered on Nia R; three, Jan 17, Nia R at Lewiston (FMR et al)—last; three, Feb 6, Dunkirk Harbor (FMR et al). Little Gull: one, Jan 17, Nia R at Lewiston (FMR et al)—only report. **Common Tern:** one, Dec 27, Nia R opp Tonawanda (HDM et al); one, Jan 2, Dunkirk Harbor (FMR et al)—the first winter records between Dec 8 and Apr 5 in the Region.

Barn Owl: one, Dec 3 (TLB) and Jan 1 (GH), Hamburg—only reports. Snowy Owl: the expected flight that began in late Oct and Nov involved fewer individuals than has often been the case in flight years. As the winter progressed they became less often reported than during Nov and Dec. As usual, most birds were seen in the metropolitan Bflo area. Other reports are: one-two frequently through period, Lyndonville area (WGS); one, Dec 6, Greenhurst, Chaut Co (CMB); one, Dec 27 and Feb 26, Batavia (GB); one, Jan 3 (WWB) and Feb 6 (FMR et al), Dunkirk Harbor; one, Feb 18, Eden (TLB); one, Feb 19, near Olcott (GGW et al). Harold Axtell examined some pellets brought from an area frequented by one-three individuals on the Nia R opp Bflo and found them to contain only the remains of three house rats. Long-eared Owl: one, Jan 31, Evans (WWB)—only report; continues to become more scarce each winter, with no major roosting areas having been found in about five years. Short-eared Owl: exceedingly scarce on Grand Island with none reported Dec 27 on BCC for the first time since 1953; a major concentration in Lyndonville-Shadigee area with Rough-legged Hawks—max counts here were 16-Dec 5, 24-Jan 17, 15-Feb 6, 32-Mar 22, 41-Mar 23 and 37-Mar 29 (WGS). Saw-whet Owl: one, Jan 6, Hamburg (TLB)—only report.

**Goatsuckers — Starling:** Belted Kingfisher: for the first time in a number of years we have several winter reports for the Nia R area, where formerly they were regular in very small numbers at this time of the year. Their recent scarcity seems to be correlated with the noticeable disappearance of other fish-eating birds during winter, like the Great Blue and Black-crowned Night Herons, which also were regular in small numbers. The number of wintering birds reported from open streams in the southern tier counties is increasing. Yellow-shafted Flicker: more wintering throughout Region than average; one frequented a feeding station where it was observed eating small seeds. Red-bellied Woodpecker: one, Jan 19, Feb 19 and Mar 1-31, Batavia (GB)—usual locality; one, Mar 28 (DS et al)

and Mar 30 (MME) at feeder, Knowlesville Rd., Town of Alabama—the second report in four yrs from the OO area. Red-headed Woodpecker: two, Dec 27, Beaver ISP (AEU et al); one, Jan 3, Transit Bridge, Alleg Co (LDB); one, Jan 31 and three, Feb 7, Fort Nia (WHK)—indicative of a good acorn crop. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one, Dec 29, Belmont (LDB)—rare in winter. Eastern Phoebe: one, Mar 27, Wanakah (TLB)—first migrant. Horned Lark (*E.a.alpestris*): 10 Jan 17, near Wilson (WHK); two, Feb 27, Lake View (TLB); four, Mar 1, Marila (HCS); two, Mar 11, Eden (TLB); two, Mar 27 and four, Mar 28, Alabama (RCR et al). Common Crow: 500, Dec. 28, Alfred (LDB)—indicative of Alleg Co roost that still is to be specifically located. Black-capped Chickadee: somewhat less common than average according to a number of observers, but Christmas Count data shows about average numbers. Tufted Titmouse: one, Dec 11, Lakewood, Chaut Co (CMB); four, Dec 27, Jamestown area (JCC); two, Dec 31, Fluvanna, Chaut Co (CMB et al); one, Dec 27 and Jan 1, Grand Island (FMR et al); two, Jan 26-27 and one, Feb 15, 20, 23, Lewiston (WHK); one, Jan 6-7, Mar 3, 12, 21-24, Springbrook (FD et al); one-two at a feeder occasionally in suburban Tonawanda (CAR)—a somewhat wider distribution especially north of Bflo. Red-breasted Nuthatch: very scarce with only four-five reports of single birds other than max of six, Jan 1, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BACC).

Winter Wren: one, Dec 27, 31, Jamestown (CMB et al)—only report. Mockingbird: one throughout the period, Rensch Rd, Amherst (RCR et al)—seen feeding on thorn apple fruits and decaying apples; one, Jan 30, near Busti, Chaut Co (EMP); one, Feb 6, near Shadigee, Orleans Co (WGS); one Feb 9, Athol Springs (WC). Brown Thrasher: one, Dec 5, 9, 11, 19, Jamestown (CMB). Robin: more wintering individuals especially about Mountain Ash trees than usual with max of 17, Dec 13, Tonawanda (AF) and 15-25, Jan 4-20, Lewiston (WHK); 20, Feb 21, Belvidere, Alleg Co (LDB)—probably early migrants; generally scarce during most of Mar compared with most years until the night of Mar 27-28 when thousands moved into the Region. Hermit Thrush: one, Feb 8, Eden (TLB)—rare winter resident. Eastern Bluebird: one, Feb 27, Wanakah (TLB)—first migrant; max 10, Mar 28, Springbrook (HCS). Golden-crowned Kinglet: scarcer than usual. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: one, Dec 27, Beaver ISP (AEU et al)—very rare in winter. **Bohemian Waxwing:** one, Jan 10 Belmont (LDB)—seen well with Cedar Waxwings. Cedar Waxwing: more abundant than usual especially about Multiflora Rose hedges; max of 1-150, Dec 6-31, Belmont (LDB), 172, Jan 1, Hamburg-East Aurora area (BACC), 175, Jan 5, Derby (TLB) and 100, Jan 25, Springbrook (FD). Northern Shrike: well distributed throughout Region but not as common as in some years; max three, Feb 6, Lyndonville area (WGS); one was seen feeding on a junco in Lewiston (WHK); definite movement occurred Mar 1-10. Loggerhead Shrike: one, Mar 31, OO area (HHA et al)—only report. Starling: 1000, Mar 30, Jamestown Roost (CMB).

**Warblers — Vireos:** Myrtle Warbler: one, Dec 24 and Jan 7, Beaver ISP (AF et al); one, Feb 9, Pt. Stockholm, Chaut Co (KOS).

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Wintering blackbirds, especially Redwinged Blackbirds and Cowbirds at feeding stations, were more common than usual. Max counts of wintering birds: Eastern Meadowlark—eight, Jan 15 and nine, Jan 26, Lyndonville (WGS); 19, Jan 21 and 12, Jan 22, Wellsville (LDB). Redwinged Blackbird—25, Dec 23, Belmont (LDB). Common Grackle—12, Dec 1, Hamburg (TLB); eight, Feb 1, Wellsville (LDB). Brown-headed Cowbird—22, Dec 1-31 and 2-30, Jan 1-31, Hamburg (RFA et al); 2-25, Dec 1-31, Belmont (LDB); 38, Dec 27 (BCC); 15-75, Jan 4-31, Lewiston (WHK). Rusty Blackbird: one, Dec 14 and Jan 1, Belmont (LDB); one, Jan 15-16, Springbrook (FD); three, Feb 23-24, Lewiston (WHK)—this bird becomes more regular in winter each year—all these



reports are from feeders. All Mar migrant icterids were delayed and it wasn't until Mar 26-28 that numbers more suggestive of the average Mar appeared, about two weeks late. Estimates Mar 30 at the Jamestown Roost are as follows: Redwinged Blackbird-500, Rusty Blackbird-500 (equals previous max spring count), Common Grackle-200, Brown-headed Cowbird-1000 (CMB).

Evening Grosbeak: six, Jan 2 (SCC); one, Jan 24, Hamburg (TLB); five, Feb 9 and one, Feb 13-14, Friendship (RLN); 12, Feb 26, Richburg, Alleg Co (LJ)—only definite reports all winter; other reports coming to our attention indicate a very limited early Feb movement. Purple Finch: scarce with a "brief and light, but definite movement about the second week of Feb" (HHA); max 16, Mar 20-21, Jamestown area (GGW et al). Common Redpoll: two, Mar 25, Chestnut Ridge Park (TLB)—only report. Pine Siskin: two, Jan 2 (SCC) and six, Mar 11, Wellsville (LDB)—only reports. Rufous-sided Towhee: one male, Dec 14-Mar 31, Rensch Rd, Amherst (RCR et al); 9 other reports of single birds from 8 locations—far more winter reports than usual. Field Sparrow: one, Dec 4, Hamburg (TLB); one, Jan 1-23 (EO) and Jan 4 (LDB), Belmont; one, Jan 23, Pt. Stockholm (KOS); one, Feb 28, Chaut Lk Outlet (AC et al)—more winter reports than usual. **Harris's Sparrow**: one imm male at feeder of Mr. and Mrs. William Kranz, Pleasant Ave, Lake View, Erie Co; first identified Jan 16 (RFA) but reported to have arrived in mid Dec; observed and photographed by many observers throughout period; this bird often sang. White-crowned Sparrow: unprecedented number of about 75-100 wintered at an abandoned nursery at Newfane, Nia Co (HHA, WHK et al); other winter reports—10 other reports of one to five birds from 4 locations—this bird becomes more common and widespread each winter. White-throated Sparrow: less common than last year. Fox Sparrow: one, Dec 5-15, Rensch Rd, Amherst (RCR et al); two, Dec 27, Jamestown area (JCC); one, Jan 15, Fluvanna (CMB). Swamp Sparrow: three, Jan 28, Chaut Lk Outlet (AC et al)—few recent winter records for southern tier. Lapland Longspur: apparently a fair late Feb-mid Mar flight; max 26, Feb 27, Somerset (RB et al) and 25, Mar 14, Shadigee (RCR et al). Snow Bunting: scarce all winter; most reports for Jan and Feb with max of 175, Jan 7 and 100, Feb 1, Wellsville (LDB) and 500, Feb 20, near Stockton, Chaut Co (EMP et al); definite movement occurred last week of Feb but almost no early Mar reports when they quite often are the most abundant.

48 Dartmouth Avenue, Buffalo 14215

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## REGION 2 — GENESEE

ALLEN E. KEMNITZER

The first month of the period started out like the beginning of a long, hard winter. However, a moderating trend developed and December actually averaged 0.9 degrees above normal temperature for the month and 3.4 inches below normal precipitation. January provided a generous amount of wintry weather with temperatures averaging below normal and precipitation above normal. While snow covered the ground during most of January and February, heavy accumulations did not occur. The last two months of the period recorded below average precipitation. An early spring seemed indicated during the first two weeks of March, but this brief spell of mildness did not last and most ponds and bays remained frozen to the last days of the period with March temperatures averaging 2.8 degrees below normal.

The severe winter weather of early December pushed out, or otherwise eliminated, many of the late migrating or lingering species. Flights of northern finches never developed. The Christmas Census, held on Dec 27, resulted in a species count considerably lower than last year's. It was a "Snowy Owl year" locally, with a number of individuals remaining in the area for the entire period. Along the west lakeshore, Horned Larks, Lapland Longspurs, and Snow Buntings were observed in increasing numbers during the last week of January. Larger numbers than usual of Cedar Waxwings appeared quite widespread throughout the area during the latter part of February and early March. Small scattered flights of Canada Geese, Red-winged Blackbirds, Common Grackles, Mourning Doves, and Robins took place during the first week of March announcing the beginning of spring migration. This was interrupted by colder than average weather for the remainder of the month and the period ended with the migration of many species far behind schedule.

Among the outstanding birds reported during the winter season were: Eared Grebe, Surf Scoter, Common Scoter, Gyrfalcon, Red Phalarope, Pomarine Jaeger, Little Gull, Boreal Owl, Red-headed Woodpecker, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Nashville Warbler, and Oregon Junco.

Abbreviations used below are as follows: BB—Braddock's Bay; CL—Conesus Lake; DEP—Durand-Eastman Park; GR—Genesee River; HSP—Hamlin State Park; IB—Irondequoit Bay; L—Lakeshore; OB—Oklahoma Beach; PB—Point Breeze; RS—Russell Station; SB—Sodus Bay; WL—West Lakeshore; WP—Webster Park.

Names of observers used in the text: SB—Stephen Barnes; WEB—Walter E. Benning; GD—(Mrs.) Gertrude Davis; JF—John Foster; WH—William Hartranft; AEK—Allen E. Kemnitz; BK—(Mrs.) Beatrice Kemnitz; JWK—(Mrs.) J. W. Kennedy; GL—(Dr.) Gerhard Leubner; WCL—Walter C. Listman; WL—Warren Lloyd; RM—Ruth MacRae; AM—Alfred Maley; RGM—Robert G. McKinney; JM—Joseph McNett; TM—Thelma McNett; MM—Marianne Menuhin; HSM—Howard S. Miller; LM—(Mrs.) Laura Moon; NM—(Dr.) Neil Moon; WM—(Dr.) William Muchmore; FM—(Mrs.) Frances Munson; RTO—Richard T. O'Hara; HRS—(Mrs.) H. R. Smith; AS—Alfred Starling; ES—(Mrs.) Esther Stiles; MS—Maryanne Sunderlin; ST—Stephen Taylor; FT—Frank Templeton; TT—Thomas Tetlow.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: one, CL on Jan 2 (WCL et al). Red-throated Loon: one at IB, Dec 19 (AEK), remained in the area about three weeks, observed for the last time, Jan 9 (AEK, RGM). Red-necked Grebe: singles reported from several locations, after having been unusually scarce during the fall season; one at Kendall, Dec 12 (AEK); one at WP, Dec 13 (AEK, HSM, et al); one at OB, Dec 19 (AEK, ST, et al); one at SB, Dec 20 (MM, ES). Horned Grebe: relatively scarce. **Eared Grebe:** one at CL on Jan 1 (WCL) was observed under favorable conditions; on the following day, the Christmas Census, the Eared Grebe could not be found. Pied-billed Grebe: one, Dec 19-Jan 1, at IB (AEK); one, Jan 9, at SB (AEK, RGM); one, Jan 24, on GR (JD, HSM).

Three Mute Swans were reported from PB, Jan 30 (AEK). They were observed in the outlet channel of Oak Orchard Creek for two months and were noted with a fourth Mute Swan on March 28 (BK, AEK). The origin or status of these swans as feral birds was not known at this writing. Canada Goose: migrating flocks appeared along the west lakeshore the first week in March, although most ponds and bays remained frozen throughout March. Gadwall: two, Jan 2, CL (WCL et al). American Widgeon: four, Jan 2, CL (WCL et al). Ring-necked Duck: one, Jan 24, GR (JD, HSM). Canvasback: eighty-two, SB, on Mar 14 (WL, MS). Numbers of Canvas-

backs and Redheads began to build up at SB near the end of the period. The numbers of White-winged Scoters wintering on L Ontario seemed about average. One Surf Scoter was reported from Nine Mile Point, Feb 14 (JF, AM), and one Common Scoter was reported from SB, Jan 20 (MM, ES). Hooded Merganser: sixteen at IB, Dec 27 (WL, RM).

**Hawks — Owls:** Accipiters scarce. No Goshawks reported. A Sharp-shinned Hawk was at OB, Dec 19 (HSM, AS, ST) and another was reported from Penfield, Jan 30 (GD). A Cooper's Hawk was observed at DEP, Jan 30 (SB, AS). Although some hawks were reported moving along the lake-shore in March, good flights of early accipiters and buteos did not materialize during the month of March. Bald Eagle: two, mature, Jan 2, Little Lakes Christmas Census (JF, WL); one, mature, Feb 17, reported from Canandaigua Lake (HRS); one, mature, found dead, Mar 7, at Scottsville. The most outstanding record for the period was the observation of a white-phase Gyr Falcon at Clyde on Mar 7 (WEB), about ten days after the sighting of a white-phase Gyr Falcon at Ithaca. An excellent verification report of the Clyde record was received. Sparrow Hawk: scarce during most of the period; more numerous in March.

Killdeer: four at IB, Dec 13 (AEK); two at CL, Jan 2 (WCL); one at RS, Jan 10 (WL). One Red Phalarope was at IB Outlet, Dec 13, 19, 20 (AEK, MS, et al). A most unusual December record was the observation of an immature Pomarine Jaeger, Dec 24, on IB (JF, AM, TM). Identification was based on direct size comparison with Ring-billed Gull and on the strong, direct flight. Observers are familiar with Parasitic Jaeger. A few white-winged gulls were present throughout the period, maximum numbers occurring during the second half of February. Glaucous Gull: four at IB, Feb 17 (WL, MS). Iceland Gull: three at IB, Feb 17 (WL, MS); four, L, Feb 29 (JD, ST). A mature Little Gull was at the IB Outlet among a small flock of Bonaparte's Gulls, on the Christmas census Dec 27 (AEK, FT). Snowy Owl: noted in several locations during most of the winter; highest count for any one location was five at BB, Dec 12 (WCL). At HSP, a Long-eared Owl was reported Jan 24 (JF). There were very few reports of Short-eared Owls. A rare Boreal Owl was observed near the Lakeshore Golf Club, Feb 24-26 (AEK, RTO, et al)—see page 75. Saw-whet Owl: unreported.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Two Red-headed Woodpeckers were at Mt. Hope Cemetery during Dec and Jan (AM). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: one, all winter, Palmyra (WH); one, Dec 7-31, Irondequoit (LM, NM); one, Jan 16-31, Irondequoit (JWK). Horned Larks greatly increased in numbers along the lakeshore after the middle of January. Mockingbird: one, Feb 6, at Nine Mile Point (MM, ES). A Catbird was observed at Powder Mill Park, Dec 5 (GOS Hike). Brown Thrasher: one at Penfield, Jan 5 (HSM); another at Greece, Jan 5-26 (several observers). Hermit Thrush: one, Dec 27, Seneca Park (AM, TT); one, Jan 30, HSP (SB, WCL, AS). The Ruby-crowned Kinglet showed up on both local area Christmas Censuses: one at IB, Dec 27 (WL, RW) and one at Honeoye lake, Jan 2 (AS). Bohemian Waxwings: unreported. Cedar Waxwings: many flocks, ranging in size from just a few waxwings to large groups of two hundred to two hundred fifty, appeared throughout most of the area during late February; many were observed to be feeding on the remains of last year's bumper crop of Mountain Ash berries. The numbers of Northern Shrike present all winter seemed somewhat above normal. Some were still being reported as the period ended. Loggerhead Shrike: an early migrant, unreported at the end of March.

**Vireos — Sparrows:** A very late Nashville Warbler was carefully studied at Newark and was present from Dec 13-23 (ES). Fewer Rusty Blackbirds than usual wintered over; three were reported at Penfield, Jan 30 (GD). A



Common Grackle was at Penfield, Dec 27 (RGM) and an unusually large flock of one hundred Brown-headed Cowbirds was reported from Rochester, Feb 15 (WM). Evening Grosbeaks: scarce; two, DEP, Dec 27 (GL, LM, NM) and three at the same location, Jan 30 (SB, AS). Purple Finch: few reports for the period; nine at HSP, Feb 28 (WL, RM). A Rufous-sided Towhee spent most of the winter at a Webster feeder area (JM, TM). An Oregon Junco was at West Webster from the first day to the last day of the period (AEK, BK) and was joined by a second of its species during January and February. An Oregon Junco was at Pultneyville, Feb 6 (MM, ES) and another was reported from Webster on Feb 28 (WL). A Field Sparrow was observed at a Penfield feeder, Jan 3 (FM, et al). Lapland Longspur and Snow Bunting numbers were down all period. A pronounced, but brief, flight took place near the end of January. Sixty-four Lapland Longspurs and one hundred ten Snow Bunting were reported along WL, Jan 30 (AEK).

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## REGION 3 — FINGER LAKES

SALLY HOYT SPOFFORD

This was one of the most open winters we have had in some time. Snow accumulation was small, and at no time did more than six or eight inches cover the ground. Combined with the drought of the summer and fall, this resulted in such low water levels in ponds and streams that most small bodies of water froze early, although low temperatures were not extreme. The large lakes had less ice than usual. Montezuma began opening in early March, refroze briefly the third week, was fully open on April 2.

The Snowy Owl and Rough-legged Hawk invasion reached only the northern part of this Region, and there were almost no reports of these in the southern section. It was as poor a year for winter finches as last year was rich. We had to be satisfied with scattered individuals of most, except for a handful of Goldfinches at some feeders. No Crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, or Lapland Longspurs reported.

A female Barrow's Goldeneye appearing for the third winter and a Lesser Black-backed Gull for the second in the Cayuga Basin, and a Lesser Black-backed Gull at Elmira for the first time, were noteworthy. Outstanding bird of the year, however, was the immature white-phase Gyrfalcon at Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary on Feb. 24. (See body of report, field note to appear in July issue.)

Killdeer, Song Sparrows, blackbirds, geese, ducks and Horned Larks were conspicuous in migration on and around March 6.

Again at least one partial albino Canada Goose was noted at MNWR, as well as another bird which appeared to be a hybrid Canada-Snow. This bird, carefully observed by Walter Benning and John Morse, had a head and neck quite similar to a Blue Goose, while the body was that of a Canada. It was the size of the largest of the Canadas. A complete description is on file.

Places mentioned: Cay L—Cayuga Lake; Sen L—Seneca Lake; MNWR—Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge; SWS—Sapsucker Woods Sanctuary.

Contributors: JB—Jack Brubaker; WEB—Walter Benning; HF—Helen Fessenden; FG—Frank Guthrie; WG—William Groesbeck; WH—Wilfred Howard; JK—James Kimball; EL—Ethel Little; ML—Malcolm Lerch;

The Kingbird

DM—Dorothy McIlroy; EM—Eugene Morton; DP—David Peakall; ER—Esther Ruggles; BS—Betty Strath; BSt—Betty Starr; GAS—Gustav Swanson; MS—Mary Smith; WS—William Swallow; WRS—Walter R. Spofford; JW—Jayson Walker.

**Loons — Ducks:** Red-necked Grebe: three sightings of this rarer Grebe: one, Jan 10, Sen L (BS et al); one, Mar 14, Sen L (FG and ML); one Chemung River, Mar 28 (WH). Horned Grebes: 216 were found on waterfowl census weekend, of which 129 were on Sen L; this compares with census total of 122 in '64. Pied-billed Grebe: 8 on waterfowl census compared with 2 in '64. Great Blue Heron: several wintered; one, south end Cay L, until early Jan; one over Elmira airport at end of Dec; one, MNWR until it froze in Jan; one returned to Refuge Mar 28. Whistling Swan: continued recent increase during migration, turning up in more localities; most records last week in March: 6, Sen L; 25 Cay L; 70, Keuka L near Branchport; one, Canisteo River at Corning; one, Horseheads dump. Canada Goose: 106 at Stewart Park, Ithaca on Dec 15—high count for the last date. A few remained in Jan and Feb. On Mar 4, 185 at MNWR, as water began opening. These may have been mostly ones that winter in Finger Lakes. John Morse gives these figures for rest of month: 2000, Mar 11; 9000, Mar 18; 4000 Mar 25 (Refuge partly frozen again); 28,000, Mar 28. There were estimates of another 20,000-30,000 on Cay L at same time. Snow Geese: 150 and Blue Geese: 400, were high counts at end of March. Only one Brant reported, Sen L, last week of March.

First returning waterfowl (Widgeon) on Cay L last week February. Ducks first appeared at MNWR on Mar 18, as water opened. Mallard: the 2500 on waterfowl count was almost double last year's count; over 500 at SWS all winter. Black Ducks: increase noted on waterfowl census; 200 wintered at SWS, compared with 150 in '64. No Gadwalls or American Widgeon and only one Pintail (SWS) on waterfowl count, and Widgeon were scarce in migration on Keuka (FG). Pintail: three, Mar 27 MNWR (DP) compares with 1200 on same date a year ago. Green-winged Teal: Jan 15 and thereafter, Chemung River, Elmira; rare winterer. Wood Duck: three wintered at SWS; first spring arrivals, last week March. Redheads: although over-all count of Redheads for Finger Lakes was down this year, larger numbers appeared earlier on Cay L than usual; for ex., a large raft was seen at Farley's Point Dec 19 (DM); maximum on Cay L: 3300 on Mar 7 (WEB)—only 100 more than census count in early January. Ring-necked Duck: one (rare winterer) Cay L, Jan 16 (JK); 20 in Jan, Keuka L (FG); maximum, 100, MNWR, Mar 21; observers commented that more were seen in March this year than usual—single birds on small ponds everywhere. Canvasback: numbers were low on Cayuga and Seneca, on Jan census, above normal (300) on Keuka; however, 1200 were noted at north end of Cay L on Mar 27 (DP). Scaup: 50% decrease from '64 to '65 noted on Jan waterfowl census, and species remained relatively uncommon all winter. Common Goldeneye: approximately 1000 on waterfowl census was an increase this year. Barrow's Goldeneye: for the third year, a female was to be found with Common Goldeneyes near Sheldrake; first noted Jan 16 (JK). Bufflehead: count of 354 on January census (294 on Seneca) almost quadrupled the '64 count. White-winged Scoter: uncommon on Cay L; one noted in Jan and Feb near East Varick. The count of all three Mergansers was higher this year than in '64. Hooded Mergansers were reported in good numbers everywhere the last week of March.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture; first arrivals, last week in March. Goshawk: two or three sightings, Ithaca area, fewer than last year. Sharp-shinned Hawk: at least five individuals in Ithaca area, one of which died after being caught and held. Cooper's Hawk: two only; one, Jan 1, Ithaca, (Census); one, Jan 25, Elmira (MS). Red-tailed Hawk: one species that seems to be holding its own; more abundant, however, north of line midway across Finger Lakes than south of line. Rough-legged Hawk: half a



dozen sighted in southern half of region, slightly more common in northern half. **Golden Eagle**: one, flying high over Etna, Mar 27 (WRS); Spofford's attention was called to it by evident excitement of his captive Eagle. **Bald Eagle**: no reports during period. **Marsh Hawk**: two, Jan, Elmira area; two, Geneva area, Feb and Mar; one Ithaca area, Feb. No **Peregrine** reports. **Pigeon Hawk**: two reports, very unusual in area in winter; one, Dec 7, near SWS (HF); one, Feb 5, Forest Home, Ithaca (DM). **Sparrow Hawk**: scattered reports during period throughout area; Groesbeck noted increase in numbers last week March in Hornell area. **Gyr Falcon**: an immature white-phase individual spent 1½ hours at Sapsucker Woods on Feb 24, and was seen by numerous observers and photographed. On Mar 7, just north of Clyde, Benning saw what was probably the same bird (see Region 2 report). The next issue of the KINGBIRD will carry a complete account.

**Bobwhite**: very few reports, in view of the numbers released in area in last few years. **Turkey**: scattered reports in scattered areas indicated some spreading of this species. **Killdeer**: at least one wintered on Cay L. **American Woodcock**: arrived between Mar 25 and 28, ten days later than usual. **Common Snipe**: one wintered again at Clyde for 3rd year (WEB); no reports of others before Mar 31. **Glaucous Gull**: one, (a creamy bird) Dec 18, Stewart Park, Ithaca (DM); one (white), Feb 11, Stewart Park (DM); one, late March, very white bird, (probably 2nd year), Sen L, several observers. **Iceland Gull**: one, Mar 8, Stewart Park, Ithaca (DM). **Great Black-backed Gull**: max 26, Stewart Pk, Ithaca. **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: for second successive winter at south end Cay L. First seen Dec 7 (DM). Regularly observed, through Mar 21. A different, and darker-backed individual of the species was seen at Elmira Jan 16 and Feb 17 (AF et al). Opportunities for close observation of leg color and size comparisons with Great Black-backed and Herring Gulls. **Franklin's Gull**: an adult in winter plumage, first seen Dec 8, Stewart Park, Ithaca (DM). Present for two weeks. Second record for Cay Basin.

**Barn Owl**: no reports. **Great Horned Owl**: several nests in Cay L Basin showed incubation in progress in late Feb. **Snowy Owl**: less than a dozen reports, all but one in northern half of region. **Short-eared Owl**: several, Jan. and Feb, Mud Lake road west of Sen L (JB); only one or two other reports. **Barred Owl**: the resident bird heard occasionally in SWS.

**Swifts — Shrikes**: **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: at least six at south end of Cay L. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: an imm. bird wintered at the Morey Nichols feeder, Interlaken, Rte. 89. Another (age?) was seen in Feb, Italy Hill (near Keuka) (fide FG). **Horned Larks**: wintered in numbers in Geneva area (JW); residents and migrants returning by third week Feb. **Blue Jay**: fewer complaints about large numbers at feeders, so perhaps a slight decline. **Raven**: (rare) one, Jan 28 Trumansburg, (WS). **Black-billed Magpie**: at feeders in Horseheads, Mar 25 and 26, photographed; no indication of recent captivity (Gleason and Hartman). **Boreal Chickadee**: one, Jan 2, Montour Falls (BS). **Red-breasted Nuthatch**: single report all winter, in contrast with last few years. **Winter Wren**: only one, Jan 11, west side Skaneateles, (BSt.). **Carolina Wren**: one only, all winter, Forest Home (EL). **Mockingbird**: four reports of wintering birds in Region. **Catbird**: one wintered, South Hill, Ithaca, Brosseau feeder. **Brown Thrasher**: one wintered, Freeville, Beck feeder. **Robins**: arrived in numbers in Ithaca area on Mar 28; very few wintered in spite of food and open weather. **Golden-crowned Kinglet**: almost completely missing. **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**: one at Etna feeders, January. **Cedar Waxwing**: numerous reports of flocks. **Northern Shrike**: one, banded Jan 27, Etna (EM).

**Warblers — Sparrows**: **Myrtle Warbler**: only two reports of wintering Myrtles; usually a few in each part of Region. **Wintering Icterids** this

year included Meadowlarks in all areas, a few Redwinged Blackbirds, two Baltimore Orioles (one in Watkins Glen, and one in Dec in Ithaca) and many Cowbirds.

Rarely has there been a winter with no winter finches. Evening Grosbeaks were almost completely absent, as was last the case in '56-'57. Perhaps a dozen reports came in of one to 10 birds, in March—no more. There were almost no Purple Finches, no Redpolls, no Siskins, Crossbills, or Pine Grosbeaks. A few small Goldfinch flocks remained, and came to feeders. Tree Sparrows were more in evidence after Mar 15 than before—whether a reflection of a decrease of food in the fields, or simply of the beginning of northward migrations of those that had been farther south. Fewer White-throats wintered. Oregon Junco: one, Jan, Elmira (ER), one Montour Falls (BS). Snow Buntings: several hundred, Jan 24, south of Ithaca (GAS); one flock of 200, Feb 4, near Hornell (WMG).

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## REGION 4 — SUSQUEHANNA

LESLIE E. BEMONT

It was a relatively warm and open winter, with all the sub-zero temperatures and persistent snow cover coming in January and the first week of February. In mid March, after the arrival of some early migrants there was a short period of below normal temperatures accompanied by snow that slowed the migration. No casualties were reported, but bluebirds, after being reported for 4 days, disappeared for about 10 days. The last 3 days of March were well below normal in temperature and migrants of a number of species such as Cowbirds, Grackles, Robins, Juncos and Fox Sparrows were present in large numbers, possibly the result of a "damming" effect of the cold weather.

The relative warmth prevented Skaneateles Lake from freezing over as it usually does, making it possible for several species of diving ducks to winter there for a change. Among raptors the winter belonged to the Rough-legged Hawks, although Red-tailed Hawks remained in some numbers and a Goshawk and two Pigeon Hawks seem noteworthy.

Among the "irregular" passerines only Cowbirds, Goldfinches and Cedar Waxwings were present in any real numbers during the heart of the winter. There were no reports of crossbills, but most other winter finches were reported at least once, although in drastically reduced numbers. Even Tree Sparrow numbers were well below normal. Hopefully this was due to bountiful supplies of natural foods in other areas. A side effect of such a dull winter is that it causes observers to stay home more willingly, making the reports even duller than the winter.

Contributors: LA—Mrs. L. Atkinson; LB—Leslie Bemont; M&AD—Marilyn & Anna Davis; RD—Robert Dirig; GF—G. Field; CG—Clinton Gerould; SG—Selena Gorton; JG—John Gustafson; CH—Claude Howard; FL—Florence Linaberry; HM—Harriet Marsi; LN—Mrs. L. Newman; JO—Jack Osadchey; RP—Robert Pantle; R&MS—Robert & Mary Sheffield; DW—Don Weber; MW—Mildred White; R&SW—Ruth & Sally White; RW—Ruth Williams; SW—Stuart Wilson; HW—Herbert Wisner.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: 3, Jan 10, on Delaware River at Shinnepoke for the Waterfowl Census (RD) and 4, Mar 14, flying over Skyline in Tioga Co. (CG, MW, RW)—only reports. Red-throated Loon: 1, Dec 27, Chenango Valley State Park (P. Kalka, Jr., P. Kalka, Sr., R&MS) for the Christmas Census; still in the same area the next day (R&SW); only the second reported in the Region in about 12 years. Horned Grebe: 1, caught

Dec 4 at the Cortland Water Works, held at Cortland State Teachers College until Dec 17 and then released (JG). Pied-billed Grebe: 1, Mar 27, at Owego (CG, MW) and 1, "in March", on Skaneateles Lake (JO). Great Blue Heron: wintering birds reported at Owego (E. Howe), Cortland (LA) and Sidney (Mrs. G. Tërwilliger); migrants Mar 24, Owego (D. Raftis); arrived at heronry at Candor Mar 30 (DW).

Whistling Swan: 1, Mar 17 to 30, Marathon (JG); 2, Mar 20, Upper Lisle (SG), at least 1 remaining to Mar 31; 5, Mar 27, Campville (MW); 3, Mar 27, Owego (M. Hills). Canada Goose: a flock, Jan 4, Oquaga Lake (SW); first migrants Mar 3, Ingraham Hill (CH); heavy flights, particularly Mar 22 and 23; several flocks grounded by a snow storm at Candor Mar 23 (DW). Pintail: 2, Jan 17, Binghamton for the Waterfowl Census (HM, G. Corderman); 1, Endwell, Feb 14 (E. Washburn); migrants from Mar 18. Green-winged Teal: 1 on Skaneateles Lake during Jan and Feb (JO); at least 15 at Upper Lisle, Mar 13 (SG). Blue-winged Teal: "seen during the last week of March", Oneonta (J. New). Am. Widgeon: Mar 18, Binghamton (HM, FL). Wood Duck: 1, Jan 9 and 10, Sherburne Game Farm (R&SW); migrants Mar 18, Binghamton (HM, FL). Redhead: up to 150, Skaneateles Lake, "all winter" (JO). Ring-necked Duck: Mar 9, Binghamton (FL). Canvasback: thru the winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); 1, Jan 10, Hancock (RD); 1, Feb 14, Binghamton (C. Jennings); Mar 23 and 31 at Owego (J. Shuler, RW, MW). Scaup: thru the winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); 3, Mar 13, Whitney Point Dam (SG), first migrants. Common Goldeneye: thru winter on Skaneateles Lake (JO); usual small numbers on rivers after Jan 1, the largest flock 40, Feb 21, Owego (CG, MW); increased numbers at Whitney Point Dam the last few days of Mar. Bufflehead: Feb 7, Owego (CG, MW, RW), the only report. Old Squaw: 1, Dec 27, Endicott for the Christmas Census (LB, EW); the only report. Ruddy Duck: 1, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census, the only one. Hooded Merganser: 1, Mar 7, Lounsberry in Tioga Co. (CG), the first; noticeably more numerous than in most years. Common Merganser: wintering population not significantly different from normal; migrants appearing about Mar 13 seemed up in numbers. Red-breasted Merganser: 1, Jan 7 and 8, Sidney (GT)—only report.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: 1, Mar 2, Windsor (SW), the first; reported regularly from Mar 6 at Hancock (RD). Goshawk: 1, Jan 19 and 20, Oxford (Mrs. A. Stratton), second hand reports of this bird hanging around feeders in Oxford for nearly a month previously. Sharp-shinned Hawk: substantially more reports than in other years from Feb 4 on. Cooper's Hawk: the usual small number of reports. Red-tailed Hawk: more than the usual number of winter reports, and a marked increase in numbers after Mar 14. Red-shouldered Hawk: 1, Jan 16, Lordville (SW); 2, Mar 6, Upper Lisle (SG)—the only reports. Rough-legged Hawk: in good numbers everywhere all period; 7, Feb 18, Whitney Point (HM, FL), all in view at the same time. Bald Eagle: 1, Mar 5, 12 and 27, Walton (RD); 1, Mar 13, Skyline (RW); 2, Mar 20, Cortland (LN). Marsh Hawk: Dec 8, Chenango Bridge (SG); no more until Feb 4, Cortland Co. (JO); migrants from Mar 18. Pigeon Hawk: 1, Feb 13 to 15, Cortland (L. Stone, A. Christopher); 1, Mar 27, Ingraham Hill (CH). Sparrow Hawk: wintering birds seemingly became more numerous after Jan 1; migrants from about Mar 13.

Bobwhite: 4, at least thru Feb, Freetown in Cortland Co. (L. Stone); 1, Mar 15, in Cortland area (Blanchard). Turkey: Jan 5, Oquaga Lake (SW); 2 birds at Candor (DW). Killdeer: Feb 28, Cortland (F. Newman) and Candor (DW). Woodcock: Mar 25, Chenango Forks (M&AD) and Choconut Center (R&MS). Common Snipe: Mar 21, Candor (RP). Herring Gull: the usual number wintering; at least 100, Mar 13, Whitney Point Dam (SG). Ring-billed Gull: Dec 17, Cortland (GF); no more until Feb 28, Endwell (HM, G. Corderman). Great Black-backed Gull: Feb 1, Skaneateles (JO).



eles Lake (JO); Feb 18, Cold Brook (JG); rarely reported in the Region. Mourning Dove: 34, Dec 20, Homer (GF); 6, Endwell, Dec 27 (LB); seen daily all winter, Cortland (LA); no others until Mar 6. Screech Owl: numbers still low but improving. Horned Owl: number of reports increasing each year; reported nesting at Homer, Mar 6 (GF, Griffin); at a Candor nesting site eggs hatched about Mar 15 (DW); active nest found at Ingraham Hill Mar 18 (CH). Snowy Owl: Jan 12, Campville (Urban); 1, Mar 10, at Montrose in nearby Pennsylvania, the only ones. Barred Owl: one, Dec 27 and Feb 5, Hancock (RD); 1, Dec 28 and Feb 13, East Sidney (HW).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: only absent between Jan 31 and Mar 6. Yellow-shafted Flicker: 1, Feb 14, Owego (MW); 1, Mar 7, Whitney Point (R&MS); 1, Mar 30, Owego (Mrs. T. Flavin); the only reports. Pileated Woodpecker: a noticeable increase in the number of reports from year to year. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Mar 24, Sidney (F. Quick), reported nowhere else. Phoebe: Mar 30, Candor (RP) and Cortland (LN). Horned Lark: singing Feb 21, Endicott (R&MS); "nesting", Mar 1, Cortland (LN). Tree Swallow: 20, Mar 29, Cortland (LN), the only ones. Blue Jays: reported to be either numerous or scarce depending on the locality; at E. Sidney, 6 to 8 birds all winter except Feb 2 to 12 when numbers temporarily jumped to 27 to 37 (HW). Tufted Titmouse: reported regularly for at least part of the period at Hancock (RD), Candor (RP) and Cortland (Davis); also reported at Chenango Forks (M&AD) and 11 on the Binghamton Christmas Census. Red-breasted Nuthatch: 2, regular at Freetown to mid Feb (A. Christopher), otherwise absent. Brown Creeper: Mar 25, Deposit (SW), several singing.

Winter Wren: Dec 10, Deposit (SW); 1, Mar 6, E. Sidney (HW). Mockingbird: 1, Mar 8, Binghamton (LT). Catbird: Dec 6, Binghamton (HM). Robin: regular reports to about Dec 20; the usual scattered winter reports until about Mar 4 when early migrants started appearing; numbers increased noticeably from Mar 15 until Mar 28 when the main wave of migrants arrived; Mar 29 and 30, "big migrating flocks—thousands", Deposit (SW). Eastern Bluebird: 2, Mar 13 Candor (RP); 14, Mar 14, Owego (R.&F. Benedict); after Mar 16 none until Mar 28. Golden-crowned Kinglet: scarce all winter. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: Dec 19, Cortland (GF). Water Pipit: Mar 26, Owego (HM), no others. Cedar Waxwing: seemed more numerous than in other years. Northern Shrike: a few reports from almost everywhere in the Region.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Eastern Meadowlark: 1, Dec 9, Cortland (LN); 1, Jan 1, South Owego (CG); Mar 4, Chenango Bridge (SG); migrants from Mar 23 on. Redwinged Blackbird: a few stayed until Jan 6, then none until 200 males arrived at Ingraham Hill, Mar 2 (CH); common from then on. Rusty Blackbird: 1, Dec 18, Cortland (LN) and 1, Jan 1 thru 11, Cortland (LA); spring migrants from Mar 14, Chenango Bridge (SG). Common Grackle: a few wintering birds at Cortland and Binghamton; migrants from about Mar 2. Brown-headed Cowbird: reported fairly frequently all winter, migrants starting to swell numbers about Mar 10, and large flocks arriving Mar 29.

Cardinal: 70, Dec 27, Binghamton Christmas Census; 40, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census; regular at Unadilla (HW); "firmly established" at Deposit (SW). Dickcissel: 1, Dec 27, Nanticoke (LB); Jan 12, Sidney (GT). Evening Grosbeak: almost completely absent from most of the Region, but a few stayed around Norwich (R&SW) and Deposit (SW); Cortland also appears to have had more than most other parts of the Region. Purple Finch: very few in Dec, numbers increasing slightly during Jan and Feb; numbers increased a little more rapidly in Mar but they were still not very numerous at the end of the period. Pine Grosbeak: 8, Dec 17, Walton (RD); 7, Jan 1, Cortland Christmas Census. Redpoll: "only a few during winter", Oneonta (J. New); none anywhere else. Pine Siskin:



2, Mar 12, Cortland (LN), the only ones. Goldfinch: fairly common all winter, but more so after about Feb 27. Rufous-sided Towhee: a male regularly at a feeder near Sidney until Feb 12; 1, Mar 3, Endwell (HM); no more until Mar 30. Slate-colored Junco: reported regularly all winter in most of the Region but in small numbers for the most part; large numbers of migrants at Deposit Mar 29 to 31 (SW). Oregon Junco: 1, about Jan 1, Binghamton (R. Schumann); 2, Jan 23 thru end of Mar, near Deposit (SW); 2, Feb 13, Choconut Center (R&MS) and at the same place Feb 28 and Mar 7; Mar 29 to 31, Chenango Forks (M&AD). Tree Sparrow: much lower numbers than in other years. Field Sparrow: 1, Mar 6, Vestal (R&MS) and 2, Mar 16, Ingraham Hill (CH); only reports. White-crowned Sparrow: 1, Dec 27, Chenango Bridge (SG, R. Saunders). White-throated Sparrow: the usual small number of scattered individuals wintering at feeders. Fox Sparrow: 1, all winter at Scott in Cortland Co. (Paquette); Mar 16, Chenango Forks (M&AD); Mar 29 to 31, 104 banded at Deposit (SW) and large numbers reported at several other localities. Song Sparrow: wintering birds regular at a few feeders all winter; 33, Dec 27, Binghamton Christmas Census; migrants noticeable about Mar 2. Snow Bunting: relatively small number all winter; 100 or more, Feb 20, Candor (DW), the largest flock reported.

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## REGION 5 — ONEIDA LAKE BASIN

Fritz Scheider

The mild Dec weather with scant snow cover and brief freezing periods was abruptly terminated by early January's severe freezing. Intense cold and only modest snow cover characterized the latter two-thirds of Jan and Feb. Ice conditions along the Oswego River and Lake Ontario attained record proportions; from late Jan to late Mar the pack ice in Mexico Bay and at Selkirk Shores State Park extended from hill to horizon. Bridgeport and Brewerton, open-water points on Oneida Lake, froze solidly, and Onondaga Lake iced over except for the sewage outlet on the west shore. Despite the severe cold, snow cover was in general slight, and in Dec and Feb weeks passed with no snow cover present. The absence of accumulated snow in the hill country, both north and south of Oneida Lake, portends another dry, perhaps even dusty, summer. The period was bracketed by damaging ice storms Dec 6 and Mar 29. The former created havoc, breaking large tree limbs and even felling small trees in woodlots along Lake Ontario; the latter forced recently arrived passerine migrants, Mourning Doves, and Killdeers to road edges for sustenance and/or grit.

Positive features of the birding winter included 1) a heavy Snowy Owl flight, 2) a marked flight of Glaucous and Iceland Gulls, virtually confined to the Seneca River—Oswego River axis, 3) a minor irruption of Northern Shrikes, most evident Dec thru Feb, 4) a heavy wintering concentration of Common Goldeneye and Bufflehead along Lake Ontario, and 5) an array of aquatic half-hardies (Great Blue Heron, American Widgeon, Green-winged and Blue-winged Teals, Coot, Common Snipe, Kingfisher) attempting to winter, probably held north by the mild Dec weather; few survived the severe freezing of mid-Jan.

On the negative side, the general paucity of landbirds received almost uniform comment—"woods are empty"; "I can't even locate Tree Sparrows"; "a whole day without one woodpecker seen"; "where are the birds this winter?" were typical comments on this winter's birding. Patronage at feeders, however, did not seem to be reduced, as ascertained by Dr. Burt's monthly feeder survey. Also on the debit side were 1) a continued deficit of accipiters, and an absence of Marsh Hawks, 2) very low counts on

Redheads and Canvasbacks, 3) low tallies of Rough-legged Hawks and both Short-eared and Long-eared Owls (almost certainly secondary to the very low mouse population locally), and 4) except for the montane portions of Herkimer County, a Region-wide and winter-long northern finch famine.

Regional rarities for the winter include: King Eider, Golden Eagle, Black-legged Kittiwake, Mockingbird, Dickcissel, Oregon Junco, and Chipping Sparrow (q.v.).

Abbreviations: HIGMA—Howland's Island Game Management Area, Port Byron; Onon L—Onondaga Lake; SP—Sandy Pond at eastern end of Lake Ontario; SSSP—Selkirk Shores State Park near Port Ontario; Skan L—Skaneateles Lake; Syr—Syracuse; TRGMA—Three Rivers Game Management Area near Baldwinsville; L—lake; R—river; CC—Christmas Count; '65WFC—1965 Waterfowl Census, Jan 9-17; BBFS—Dr. B. P. Burt's feeder survey held the first week of each winter month.

Observers: DA—Dorothy Ackley; JRB—Jon R. Bart; DWB—David W. Beebe; MEB—Maude E. Bitz; BPB—Benjamin P. Burt; TC—Tom Cade; GLC—Gerald L. and Margaret Church; MLE—Meredith L. Estoff; MF—Mary Felle; GG—George Gage; SH—Stuart Hosler; SM—Steve Morgan; PRP—Paul R. and Sylvia Paquette; DBP—David P. Peakall; JWP—Jean W. Propst; MSR—Margaret S. Rusk; FGS—Fritz G. Scheider; CGS—Christian G. Spies; mob—multiple observers.

**Loons — Ducks:** Common Loon: last migrants Dec 3, Texas; singles noted Dec 24, Jan 11, Feb 14 Oswego to SSSP; no Finger Lakes records. Red-throated Loon: last noted Dec 12, an oiled bird at Oswego (FGS, BPB). Red-necked Grebe: singletons noted Jan 10, near Oswego (DBP, MSR) and at Onon L, Jan 12 (JWP); the absence of Feb records suggests that the new wintering birds were forced south by the severe ice conditions on L Ontario in late Jan and early Feb. Horned Grebe: last noted, Jan 10 at Oswego, where it usually winters; very scarce on Skan L, max of 12 on '65WFC—?? drop in actual population or severe cold weather?? Pied-billed Grebe: two wintered at Phoenix and Baldwinsville; first spring arrivals Mar 24, Bridgeport (MSR) and Mar 28, Verona Beach (DA). Great Blue Heron: wintering birds (max three) at Fulton thru Jan and Feb; one noted intermittently until the severe freeze-up (Jan 16) at Oneida (Peebles fide DA); first migrants noted Mar 28 (late) at Texas (MSR) and Brewerton (JWP). Whistling Swan: eight at Brewerton Mar 28 (TC, JRB) and two at Bridgeport Mar 31 (MSR); N.B.—total of 28 Whistling Swans reported in first week of Apr. Mute Swan: the feral pair at Skan L produced five young which may become free-flying birds locally; birders, beware! Canada Goose: max wintering count 14 (very low) HIGMA, Jan 13; reduced to a single bird there on Feb 6, and none wintered at Phoenix, probably due to the severe ice conditions and snow cover of late Jan and Feb; first migrants Mar 6, Brewerton (CGS). Brant: last noted Dec 13 (late), Oswego (MSR)—?? injured bird??

Mallard: winter max 450, '65WFC; first returning birds noted Mar 20-21. Black Duck: winter max 901, '65WFC. 400 Blacks Dec 13 and 400 Mallards Dec 24 in s. Madison Co. (GLC) attest to the mild Dec weather. Gadwall: first migrants noted were five, Mar 21, Fair Haven State Park. Pintail: five noted on '65WFC, from L Ontario and Seneca and Oswego Rivers; none at HIGMA, probably due to the termination of artificial feeding there; first migrants Feb 21 at Fulton and Minetto, but very scarce thru Mar with max Mar count 12, Mar 29, Cross L, showing the severe retardation of the spring flight. Wintering half-hardy ducks—Green-winged Teal, one female wintered at Baldwinsville; Blue-winged Teal, one, Dec. 26, Oswego is extremely late (SM, MSR, CGS); Baldpate, two females noted to Dec 26 at Oswego and Minetto respectively; neither Blue-winged Teal nor American Widgeon were reported in Jan. First Widgeon noted Mar 7, Onon L (CGS); the lack of any reports of Mar teal emphasizes the retarded spring. Shoveler: first migrant Mar 15, HIGMA (GG) is very early, more so in view of the weather.

Wood Duck: only one noted on Syr CC Dec 27; one other noted, a drake, Jan 9 Skan L (MSR).

Redhead: scarce thru the winter; Oswego max 50, Jan 27 (CGS); max 200 Skan L, '65WFC. Ring-necked Duck: a female at Oswego, Jan 18—Feb 21 (mob) is the only wintering bird noted; first migrants Mar 15, Brewerton; max 60, Mar 31, Brewerton. Canvasback: **very scarce** this winter with max 87, '65WFC; max Oswego count 35 on Feb 21; a steady build-up thru Mar to 355, Mar 30, Bridgeport and Brewerton (FGS). Greater Scaup; max of 3000 Minetto to Oswego Jan 25 (JWP); this is a marked drop from previous years' totals; a large number of oiled birds was noted in Dec and early Jan; Scaup dispersal to Brewerton, Bridgeport, and Baldwinsville noted Mar 8-31. Common Goldeneye: extraordinarily abundant this winter with 2900, '65WFC, primarily from L Ontario; counts remained high thru Feb, and Mar counts at Brewerton and Bridgeport were regularly in the 300-600/day range. Bufflehead: 110 noted on '65WFC; max of 300, Feb 11, Oswego and L Ontario (FGS) but this large concentration disappeared within a few days. Oldsquaw: max tally 410, '65WFC, from Oswego and L Ontario; **none** reported away from L Ontario; courtship noted as early as Jan 24. **King Eider**: a resplendent adult male noted Jan 24 and 31, Feb 14, Mar 11 and 14 at Oswego (mob); surprisingly enough, none of the more usual females or immature males were reported during the entire winter. White-winged Scoter: winter counts somewhat greater than usual—47, Jan 10, and 30, Feb 4, at Oswego. A female Common Scoter Jan 10, Lakeview (JWP, MLE) is the only winter record. Surf Scoter: singletons Feb 14 at Oswego (DBP) and Phoenix (MSR); these individual Scoters (regularly females or immature males) most likely are injured birds.

Hooded Merganser: 11 noted from Baldwinsville to Oswego, '65 WFC, the majority females or immature males; first migrant, Mar 1, Brewerton, is early in view of the very cold weather; max 25, Mar 31, SSSP (JWP). Common Merganser: peak tally 3000, Jan 16 and Feb 4, Oswego (concentrations there are usually due to freeze-up on the river and/or severe lake storms); 1150 noted Mar 30, Cross L (MSR) could be Oswego Harbor birds but are more likely spring migrants. Red-breasted Merganser: peak Dec tally 300 Dec 3; Jan-Feb peak count, however, only 56, mainly Oswego and Lakeview; 160, Mar 30, at Fair Haven State Park (MSR) are undoubtedly returning birds.

**Hawks — Owls**: Accipiters were extremely scarce except for occasional Cooper's and Sharp-shinned Hawks at feeders (Oneida, MF; Eaton, GLC; Syr, DD); in the field only four Cooper's and no Sharp-shinned Hawks were reported, an extraordinarily poor showing. Goshawk: an immature Dec 26, near Fulton (CGS), another immature captured in early Jan at TRGMA (Weeks fide MSR), and one noted Feb 6, near Eaton (GLC) are the only reports of this species. Red-tailed Hawk: the only common winter raptor, and counts in excess of three-four/day confined to the rat-rich rubbish dumps peppering the periphery of Syr (e.g. 30, Dec 27, Syr CC). Red-shouldered Hawk: last noted Dec 8-9 Oneida (MF). Rough-legged Hawk: max of four, Dec 27, Syr CC; poor tallies otherwise, Dec thru Feb, with maxima of two/day, thus **remarkably scarce**, especially so in view of the heavy fall movement; returning migrants Mar 4-6 Derby Hill (TC, FGS, CGS). **Golden Eagle**: an adult, Mar 18, Derby Hill (TC, FGS) is the earliest local record; there is only one other Mar record. Bald Eagle: an adult Jan 23-30, HIGMA (GG), and another adult (? same bird) noted Jan 31, Fulton (SH) are the only reports. Marsh Hawk: last noted, a female, Dec 9, Oneida (MF); unreported from any local Christmas counts and completely absent thru the winter until Mar 18 when first migrants noted at Brewerton; reason for total lack of wintering birds—?? no mice, severe drop in population?? Sparrow Hawk: max 20, Dec 27, Syr CC; daily counts thru



winter one-three/day until Mar 18-20 when a regionwide influx occurred (mob). No spring hawk flight of over 50 birds noted in Mar; Mar hawk migration data will appear in the spring report.

Coot: one wintered at Baldwinsville; the absence of this species from Oswego and Skan L attests to the severity of the winter ice conditions. Killdeer: noted on Syr, Oswego, and HIGMA CC, but none reported after the severe mid-Jan freeze; one, Feb 1, Eaton (GLC) and two, first week of Feb, Syr (T. A. Lonergan) are difficult to place; one, Feb 15, Syr Airport, is almost certainly an early migrant. Woodcock: first noted Mar 6, Town of Manlius (JRB), a record early arrival date and not at all in keeping with the generally retarded spring. Common Snipe: single birds, trapped in mammal traps Dec 16, Eaton (GLC) and Jan 10, Kirkville (fide Burt), and a free-flying bird Jan 23, N. Syr (CGS, MSR) are probably avian residue of the mild Dec weather.

An extraordinary flight of white-winged gulls with some 30-35 different Glaucous and 15-20 Iceland Gulls reported from the Seneca R-Oswego R-Oswego Harbor axis, the majority first-year birds, but an impressive number of adult birds in Dec and again in late Feb and Mar; max for any one day 15 Glaucous, Jan 24, Onon L to Oswego, and seven Iceland, Feb 4 and 21, Baldwinsville to Oswego; none reported away from this river distribution except for occasional birds among the larids scavenging the Syr dumps. Great Black-backed Gull: winter max 324, Feb 14, Phoenix to Oswego. Herring Gull: max 6000, Jan 14, Oswego Harbor, an assemblage almost certainly secondary to the severe storm in progress that day; the adult: immature (first & second yr birds) ratio approximately 3 or 4:1, Feb 14 (DBP). No Dec reports of Bonaparte's Gull. Black-legged Kittiwake: two dead birds, both imm, picked up Jan 10 east of Oswego (CGS) is only the second modern regional record (last one, also an imm, Nov 1959).

Screech and Horned Owls: max five and 15 respectively, Dec 27, Clay Swamp (CGS, JRB). Snowy Owl: a heavy incursion this winter with counts of five, SP; five, Oswego; four, Onon L; four, Syr Airport; with one or two at Eaton, Wampsville, Oneida, Utica, Bridgeport, Syr, Brewerton, Phoenix (mob); evidence of a return flight in mid-Mar along Oneida L; their proximity to open-water areas and dumps suggests that they were faring almost exclusively on waterfowl and rats. Long-eared Owl: local roosts devoid of this species with the exception of four, Mar 8-31, Liverpool (CGS). Short-eared Owl: very scarce, with singletons only, Dec 14, Pleasant L (FGS); Dec 27, Clay Swamp; Jan 4 and 27, E Syr (JWP, MSR), probably secondary to the paucity of small rodents locally, which might also explain the low numbers of Rough-legged Hawks and Long-eared Owls. Saw-whet Owl: two noted roosting in Wood Duck boxes at HIGMA Jan 18 (GG); one there again Jan 19 (GG) and 28 (JRB).

**Swifts — Shrikes:** Yellow-shafted Flicker: max six wintered at HIGMA (JRB, CGS), Elmwood Park in Syr (MEB); and DeWitt (FGS). Red-bellied Woodpecker: a remarkable rash of records—reported repeatedly from HIGMA, Camillus (DWB, Dudden), Oswego (Mrs. F. Spink), Cato (Mrs. E. Charlebois), Port Byron (V. Cook), Baldwinsville (Mrs. M. Mathis, Mrs. Q. Wells, & Mrs. J. Nieznalski), Victory (Mrs. H. Weisbrod), LaFayette (Mrs. H. Miller), Pennellville (Mrs. Concolino), and DeWitt (FGS), all but the last three from the expected local river distribution of this species. Red-headed Woodpecker: an ad, Feb 5, Bridgeport (MEB) is the only winter record. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: singles reported Dec 2 and Jan 2, Syr (MEB, E. Higbee); also singles early Jan at Syr and early Feb at DeWitt (BBFS), a few more than the usual one/winter. Phoebe: first migrant Mar 29 (late), Oneida (Peebles, fide DA). No swallows reported in Mar. Gray Jay: one, Big Moose, Feb 7 (PRP, DA, FGS). Blue Jay: the common species this winter; BBFS, Christmas Counts, and field work all support the impression of higher numbers of Blue Jays about; especially



numerous at HIGMA and Big Moose, the geographic extremes of the Region. Black-capped Chickadees: BBFS showed no decrease from previous winters but observers in the field commented on the scarcity of the species; repeatedly one could traverse several woodlots in succession without seeing any Chickadees; the Big Moose area, Highland Forest near Fabius, and the Pulaski-Centerville sector seemed to be exceptions to this rule. Boreal Chickadee: reported Feb 7 (DA, PRP) and Mar 13 (CGS, MSR) at Big Moose; unreported away from there. Tufted Titmouse: regular now at Brewerton—max five birds (Theisen); however, unreported from previous sites at Baldwinville and Camillus.

Red-breasted Nuthatch: reported in modest numbers (five-12/day) from the Big Moose area but extremely scarce around Syr, Pulaski, and Oswego. Carolina Wren: only report, one near Fulton, Dec 26 (Paul Kelsey); none on any of B. Burt's feeder surveys. Winter Wren: after Jan 2, unreported—amazingly scarce, especially in view of the excellent Oct flight. Mockingbird: one wintered at a well-stocked feeder (peanut butter and suet) just south of Syr (Clark fide BB). Robin: singles and scattered flocks (three-32) noted in the Region, mainly in the wooded valleys south of Syr and Oneida, but several flocks reported from the Ontario lakeshore area (CGS, MSR, JWP, DB); spring birds back by Mar 4 but not widespread until the last week of Mar. Bluebird: first migrant noted Mar 31, very late, at Derby Hill (JRB). Cedar Waxwing: abundant but flocks erratic throughout the winter; max on BBFS is 724 in the first week of Mar; a remarkable group of 1000, Mar 14, near Camillus (JWP) with flocks of 35-180 reported from Liverpool, Syr, Cicero, Fair Haven, HIGMA, and Ilion (mob); a slight rise in numbers in the latter half of Mar, probably secondary to increasing field work. Northern Shrike: 21 birds reported in Dec, 22 in Jan, and 19 in Feb; Mar, however, was almost devoid of shrikes until Mar 21; between that date and Mar 31, eight birds were reported, mainly from the L. Ontario shore, suggesting spring migration. Loggerhead Shrike: first migrant Mar 25, Oneida (MF). Starling: 26,000 exterminated by the City of Syracuse this winter, compared to 55,000 the previous winter; BB believes the drop is primarily due to the current local practice of covering each day's trash with earth, thus effectively sealing off a major food source of this pesky species.

**Vireos — Warblers:** Pine Warbler: one attempted to winter at a feeder at Oneida (Hartwig fide DA) Dec 1 to 10; main foods utilized were suet and peanut butter.

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** A winter roost of 1400 Cowbirds in Syr near Onon L contained a few durable Common Grackles and Redwinged Blackbirds and the usual 10-12,000 Starlings. Cowbirds were extremely common on all monthly feeder surveys. Cardinal: local population seems to be leveling off with some 200+/month on BBFS; recorded now regularly at N Syr, Brewerton, and Bridgeport (FGS) and even as far into the northern hill country as Holland Patent (Mrs. J. Van Dresar). Dickcissel: one at a feeder thru Dec, Jordan (Mrs. B. Schmidt). Evening Grosbeak: noted by the hundreds about Old Forge and Big Moose thru Feb and Mar; around Syr, quite scarce, especially in Dec and Jan; a minor ripple of birds in mid-Jan but peak tally is 20, Sandy Creek in early Mar and 100, Mar 28, Taberg (Mrs. W. Lynes), the latter a paramontane situation; frankly, a dismal flight. Pine Grosbeak, Redpoll, White-winged Crossbill: unreported. Pine Siskin: extraordinarily scarce with none on any feeder survey; two Mar reports, Mar 2 (TC) and Mar 25 (FGS), Derby Hill near Texas certainly refer to migrants. Red Crossbill: four, Feb 7, Big Moose (PRP, DA) and one, early Jan, Pulaski, are the only reports; **no echo flight whatever!** Tree Sparrow: BBFS tallies were 282, Dec; 337, Jan; 516, Feb; 341, Mar; however, very scarce in the field in Dec with only a modest increase in numbers in Jan and Feb; no evidence of a return flight of this species in Mar; last fall's question—"Where are they?"—remains unanswered.

**Chipping Sparrow:** two, an ad and an imm, wintered at the Patten's feeder in DeWitt. This same feeder played host to a splendid ad male **Oregon Junco** from mid-Dec to mid-Jan (mob). **White-crowned Sparrow:** scattered birds in late Nov and early Dec, but the only one to survive to Mar was one at Fayetteville (Mrs. H. Armstrong). **Fox Sparrow:** no wintering birds; first migrants Mar 28, late, Phoenix (P. Evans). **White-throated, Song, and Swamp Sparrows:** increased numbers tallied on local Christmas counts but few survived the severe cold and snow of mid-Jan and by early Feb what few birds were noted were almost exclusively feeder birds. **Lapland Longspur:** scarce; noted Feb 10, three, Derby Hill (JWP); Feb 21, one, Syr Airport (FGS); migrants (some singing.) noted Mar 22-25, Syr Airport (FGS). **Snow Bunting:** noted in moderate-sized flocks (25-400) thru the winter; no major Mar movement observed. The swirling flocks of thousands, a regular early Mar highlight, went undetected—though not unsought—this year.

Corrigenda: Vol XV, No. 1, pg. 42—Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglets: arr date Sep 17 and Sep 12 respectively . . . pg. 42—Northern Shrike: . . . an imm, Oct 31, near Fair Haven (MSR).

427 S. Main Street, North Syracuse 13212

## REGION 6 — ST. LAWRENCE

FRANK A. CLINCH

The winter of 1964-65 was a mild one with the snowfall much below average. December brought some cold weather and a fair amount of snow. The January temperature was two degrees below normal and most streams and lakes were frozen. January snowfall was 16 inches compared with a normal 24 inches. February and most of March brought much mild weather and rather light snow. As soon as the calendar said that it was spring, however, the temperatures turned colder and some snow fell.

Mild weather the first part of March and the appearance of Redwinged Blackbirds, Robins, Grackles and Mourning Doves seemed to indicate an early spring, but the second half of the month was disappointing. In general there seemed to be a scarcity of birds most of the winter especially at the feeders. During March a few Evening Grosbeaks and many Purple Finches did visit most feeders. On the brighter side were the observations of a Gyrfalcon and a Hawk Owl in late December.

PRGMA is used for Perch River Game Management Area.

**Loons — Ducks:** Pied-billed Grebe: March 27, Pt Peninsula. Canada Goose: 36 at Lake St. Lawrence Jan 10 may have been from the Canadian side where they were fed during the winter; none wintered at the Wilson Hill Game Management Area; several were at Pt Peninsula Mar 20, and a few at PRGMA Mar 27. Mallard: Stony Pt Mar 14. Pintail: Mar 27 on Lake Ontario. Blue-winged Teal: Pillar Pt Dec 13, late. Wood Duck: pair at Henderson Pond Mar 31. Ring-necked Duck: 50 at Ellisburg about Mar 19. Canvasback: about 100 in the River at Cape Vincent Jan 1. Bufflehead: 25 on the waterfowl census in Jan. Oldsquaw: one Jan 3 at Pt Peninsula. White-winged Scoter: two in Jan. Hooded Merganser: Mar 20 to end of month. Common Merganser: 125 at Ellisburg Mar 20.

**Hawks — Owls:** Goshawk: Henderson Mar 1. Red-tailed Hawk: present each month and a few wintered here. Rough-legged Hawk: good numbers especially around Pillar Pt in Dec, less common later, but present to the end of Mar; high count 7 at Pt Peninsula Dec 27; one at Cape Vincent Feb 28; these hawks were more numerous in 1961-62 than in 1964-65. Marsh Hawk: seen Mar 18 and 20. **Gyrfalcon:** one at Cape Vincent Dec 23 (D. Gordon)—see Field Note for details. Sparrow Hawk: few seen in winter. Gray Partridge: in Pillar Pt—Pt Peninsula. Great Black-backed Gull: more

numerous this winter. Mourning Dove: Watertown Mar 11, Stony Pt Mar 14, Pillar Pt Mar 20.

Snowy Owl: seen in good numbers in Dec and Jan especially near Pt Peninsula and Pillar Pt; also seen near Watertown, Evans Mills and Cape Vincent; these owls were more numerous around Pt Peninsula during the winter of 1961-62, but received more publicity in 1964-65. Hawk Owl: Black River Dec 24 (Gorgen), seen later by several persons near Black River, last seen Jan 17. Barred Owl: one found dead near Waddington Dec 7. Short-eared Owl: 3 at Pt Peninsula and 3 at Pillar Pt same day, (early Jan). See Field Note for Hawk Owl and Short-eared Owl details.

**Goatsuckers — Sparrows:** Mockingbird: Cape Vincent and PRGMA, both Jan 1. Robin: flock of 20 first seen Feb 14 probably wintered near Watertown. Cedar Waxwing: at least 60 near Watertown in late Dec, 300 at Stony Pt Jan 10 and 400 at Watertown Mar 9. Northern Shrike: seen each month, not as many as some winters. Meadowlark: Jan 6, Watertown; Jan 7, Evans Mills; 10-12 near Three Mile Bay Jan 21. Redwinged Blackbird: male at Sackets Harbor Feb 25, about 200 at Henderson Harbor, several other flocks later in Mar. Brown-headed Cowbird: a few wintered. Cardinal: probably increasing in numbers. Evening Grosbeak: very few were seen in Dec and Jan, but small numbers appeared at feeders in Watertown and Gouverneur the latter half of Mar; they seemed to appear first and in larger numbers in the northern and eastern parts of the Region, Potsdam, Star Lake and Wanakeena. Pine Grosbeak: none. Pine Siskin: none. Crossbills: none. Goldfinch: 75 at South Edwards Feb 21, 15 at feeders in Wanakeena Mar 15. Purple Finch: a few in Dec and Jan, numerous at feeders from about Feb 20 to the end of Mar; they seemed about as numerous as they were in Mar 1963. Slate-colored Junco: two at feeder in Adams Center during winter; first at feeder in Watertown Mar 23. Common Redpoll: only one flock seen all winter, about 20 at Camp Drum Jan 17. Lapland Longspur: 12 at Sackets Harbor Jan 7, also at Philadelphia and Pt Peninsula in Feb. Snow Bunting: seemed rather scarce.

A report received too late for the last issue tells of a Snowy Owl that was downed by crows Oct 20, 1964 and was picked up by a boy near Potsdam. It died of internal injuries Oct 24. Dr. Hafer prepared a skin and found the bird to be a male (Cerwonka). This is very early for a Snowy Owl in this Region.

173 Haley St., Watertown

## REGION 7 — ADIRONDACK - CHAMPLAIN

HARRIET L. DELAFIELD

My area summary this winter season is pretty much a tale of woe. Amstutz from Tupper Lake cries, "Birds are scarce." Keji from Ray Brook echoes her, "Not much of interest or special for this winter report except for lack of birds to see."

The weather report from Bob Kampf at Ray Brook was most un-North Countrylike. Temperatures were above normal and snowfall way below normal all four months. The temperature low was one day of minus 32° on Jan 15. Snow depth reached only eight inches in Dec and Jan and the maximum for the entire winter was 11 inches in mid-February!

Jan and Feb produced some high winds. During a severe storm on Feb 25 a record low for the seven-year history of Mr. Kamp's weather station of 28.77 inches was recorded on the barometer. Temperatures in March were above normal at the end. Wind velocities were well below normal. Bird migrants were late.



Interest was provided by Joe Hart's five sightings of three-toed woodpeckers and by the unusually large numbers of American Goldfinches thru the period. Near the end of March strange "radio signals" which disturbed the community, were tentatively identified as the mating call of the Saw-whet Owl but the bird was not seen.

Our rivers and lakes are alarmingly low. We wait anxiously to find out how these unusual weather conditions may affect later spring migration.

Observers and initials: AA—Agnes Amstutz; EA—Elizabeth Anderson; EB—Elisabeth Barnet; ED—Ethel Dyer; HD—Harriet Delafield; JH—Joseph Hart; RH—Robert Hagar; GK—Grace Kains; JK—Joseph Keji; CDT—Count Day Team; DY—David Young.

Abbreviations: B—Brook; L—Lake; R—River.

**Loons — Ducks:** Canada Goose: one Dec 31 Saranac R (RH, DY); five March 20 Raquette R (AA). Mallard, one Jan 2 & Mar 2 Ray B (JK). Black Duck: five Saranac R Dec 31 (RH, DY); three Jan 5 Saranac R. (EA, HD); one L Clear Dec 14 (AA); one Jan 20, Mar 2 Ray B (JK). Common Goldeneye: three Mar 20 Tupper L (AA). Common Merganser: eight Saranac R Dec 31 (RH, DY).

**Hawks — Owls:** Spruce Grouse: one female Mar 12 Cranberry L Club (Herbert Doig, Game Manager, Watertown, fide JH). Ruffed Grouse: scant to non-existent reports all areas, four Dec 31 (CDT). Killdeer: one Mar 30, Tupper L (AA). Mourning Dove: one Mar 13 Tupper L (AA).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Belted Kingfisher: one thru period Saranac R (RH, DY); Ray B (JK). Pileated Woodpecker: one Saranac L Dec 29 (EB); Dec 29 Ray B (JK); Jan 10 St Regis Dam (HD); Mar 1 Saranac Rd (AA). Hairy Woodpecker & Downy Woodpecker: normal all areas. Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker: JH was the lucky observer, one Jan 9 Cascades, one Jan 29 Boreas R, one Feb 23 Waheek Corners, one Mar 1 Debar! Northern Three-toed Woodpecker: one Feb 3 Boreas R, again JH. Horned Lark: good numbers around Saranac L until Feb 20 (GK, HD); 30 Normans Ridge Mar 2 (HD). Blue Jay: good numbers thru period. Common Crow: some reported thru period especially Tupper L (AA); probably because of mild little-snow winter. Black-capped Chickadee: normal Saranac L (GK, HD); "numbers decreased one-half from last winter" Ray B (JK). White-breasted & Red-breasted Nuthatches: normal all areas. Brown Creeper: heard and seen off and on Dec 8 thru Mar 30 Ray B (JK). Robin: late; one off and on all winter Saranac L but no significant return as of Mar 31 (HD). Golden-crowned Kinglet: three Dec 31 (CDT); two Dec 13, one Jan 13 Ray B (JK). Northern Shrike: one Dec 31 Saranac L Village, caught small bird at feeder (EA, HD).

**Starling — Sparrows:** Starling: back in some numbers Saranac L Mar 4 (HD); 65 Ray B Mar 31 (JK). Redwinged Blackbird: one off and on thru period Saranac L, five Mar 15, good numbers from then on (HD); 20 March 26 Ray B (JK). Common Grackle: two Saranac L Dec 31 (CDT); one all winter Ray B (JK). Brown-headed Cowbird: few off and on thru Dec & Jan, three Mar 30 Saranac L (HD). Evening Grosbeak: spotty but fairly numerous compared to other finches; four to 40 thru period Saranac L (EA, HD); "many" Tupper L (AA); 40 Newcomb Feb 3 (JH), 15 Whitney Park Feb 4 (JH); flocks thru period, 175+ Mar 30 Ray B (JK). Purple Finch: very few reports of very small numbers all areas, largest number 12 Tupper L Feb 13 and Saranac L Mar 3. Pine Grosbeak: none. Pine Siskin: nine Jan 31 Ray B (JK); no other confirmed reports. American Goldfinch: unusually enough this was the finch of this period; 20 Feb 3 Newcomb, 25 Feb 4 Whitney Park; 25 Long L Feb 15 (JH); numerous Dec to Mar 16 Ray B (JK); numerous Saranac L, 50 Mar 4 (HD). Slate-colored Junco: very few reports; eight Dec 31 (T Cantwell); one or two in



early Dec Ray B (JK); one Saranac L Mar 30 (ED); one Saranac L last week in Mar (EB). Tree Sparrow: 12 thru period Saranac L (ED); seven to eight Gabriels, one to three Tupper L (AA); one or few Ray B (JK). Song Sparrow: one Mar 30 Saranac L (EB). Snow Bunting: 25 Jan 1 Saranac L (DY); 14-20 late Jan thru Feb 5, Saranac L (GK); 30 Jan 17 Normans Ridge (HD); 15 Chateaugay, 25 Clayburg Feb 5 (JH); flock L Clear Dec 14 and Feb 16 (AA).  
Trudeau Road, Saranac Lake

## REGION 8 — MOHAWK - HUDSON

PETER P. WICKHAM

After a mild, rather wet Dec, Region 8 experienced three cold, dry months. Temperatures in Dec averaged 27.9° at Albany, 1.4° above normal and precipitation totalled 3.28 in., 0.69 in. above normal. Much of the latter occurred as rain or as freezing rain. Temperatures at Albany in Jan, Feb, and Mar averaged 18.1°, 22.3°, and 31.2°; these were 4.6°, 1.4°, and 1.8° below normal, respectively. Precipitation in Jan totalled 1.95 in., 0.52 in. below normal; in Feb, 1.92 in., 0.28 in. below normal; and in Mar, 1.73 in., 0.99 in. below normal.

Despite the cold weather, the ground in the Hudson and Mohawk valleys was without snow cover most of the winter. This was because much of the precipitation fell as rain, sleet, or freezing rain. The lack of snow cover undoubtedly dispersed winter birds more than usual, and feeders in the area had few visitors when compared with other years. Even allowing for this fact, however, most fringillids seemed far fewer in numbers than usual throughout the area. High numbers of gulls and ducks remained on the Upper Hudson above Troy well into Jan for the first time in several years. Although it appeared in the fall that a widespread invasion of northern hawks and owls was to take place, relatively few remained and most raptors were decidedly uncommon. The only exceptions to this were Rough-legged Hawk and Great Horned Owl. Northern Shrikes seemed much more widespread than usual, perhaps also an indication of influx of northern predators.

Unusual or rare species reported during the period included the first records for Region 8 of Harris' Sparrow from two localities, Bald Eagle, Peregrine, Gyrfalcon, Virginia Rail (wintering), Glaucous Gull, Iceland Gull, Long-eared Owl, Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker, Boreal Chickadee, Bohemian Waxwing, Migrant Shrike, Dickcissel, White-winged Crossbill, Savannah Sparrow, Oregon Junco, and White-crowned Sparrow.

Abbreviations used: ADBC—Alan Devoe Bird Club; GCBC—Greene County Bird Club; SBC—Schenectady Bird Club; ADCC—Alan Devoe (Chatham) Christmas Count; GCC—Greene County (Catskill) Christmas Count; SCC—Schenectady Christmas Count; TCC—Troy Christmas Count; arr—arrived; imm—immature; I—Island; L—Lake; Max—maximum; R—River; SCR—Stony Creek Reservoir; SL—Saratoga Lake; SS—Stockport Station; UH—"Upper Hudson", the Hudson River between Troy and Stillwater; VFG—Vischer Ferry Game Management Area; WR—Watervliet Reservoir.

Observers: TB, AB—Tom and Arlene Brown; JHB, BB—James and Barbara Bush; JC—Juanita Cook; HE—Hazel Eddy; PE, GE—Paul and Georgia Erlenbach; JF—John Fuller; AG—Aden Gokay; EH—Esly Hallenbeck; MJ—Mary Johnston; MK—Marcia Kent; MDM—Mary Mickle; WN—Wendy Neefus; DR—David Rothaupt; WBS—Walton Sabin; BRS—Benton Seguin; HT—Henry Thurston; DJT—Dr. Donald Tucker; PPW—Peter Wickham; RPY—Robert Yonick; GMZ—Gladys Zimmer; bsh—Guy Bartlett, Benton Seguin, Barry Havens.

**Loons — Ducks:** No loons were reported during the period. Horned Grebe: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); no Mar reports. Pied-billed Grebe: only one, Mar 6-8, UH (bsh). Great Blue Heron: late individuals Dec 6, SCR (BRS) and Jan 10, Chatham Center (AG); only spring reports, Mar 23 and 28, Colonie (JF, DR). Black-crowned Night-heron: three Mar 5 over Delmar (R. Darrow) were unusually early. Canada Goose: last Dec 6, SL (BRS); first Mar 7, SS (PPW); good-sized flocks (70-100 birds) appeared Mar 24-28. Mallards and Black Ducks concentrated at Green I, appearing sporadically elsewhere until early Mar, high counts 227 and 1373 respectively, Jan 9 (SBC). American Widgeon: 1-2 remained on the UH through Jan 10 (SBC); first (spring) Mar 6, SS (WN), few in Mar. Pintail: an unusually high number remained late on the UH, max 26 TCC Jan 2, last Jan 10 (bsh); first spring Mar 6, SS (WN). Green-winged Teal: up to 3 remained on the UH to Jan 10 (SBC); first spring Mar 7, SS (PPW). Blue-winged Teal: first Mar 27, VFG (bsh) and in several other places later in Mar. Wood Duck: first Mar 7, SS (PPW), gradually increasing throughout area in Mar. Ring-necked Duck: last, four, SL Dec 6 (BRS); first Mar 9, Embought (JHB). Canvasback: last, sixteen, SL, Dec 6 (BRS); no Mar reports. Scaup: last two (Greater), ADCC Jan 2; first Mar 27, several areas. Common Goldeneye: a few remained throughout winter, increasing in late Feb and Mar. Bufflehead: last, ten, Dec 6 SL (BRS); first, two Mar 9, Hudson R south of Albany (bsh). Hooded Merganser: one ♀ remained on the UH through Jan 9 (SBC); first arr Mar 7, VFG (DJT); two males at Schroom L outlet Feb 27 (bsh) may have been very early migrants or wintering birds. Common Merganser: 1-9 remained on the UH throughout the winter; numbers rapidly increased in Mar, max 200 SS Mar 17 (PE, GE). Red-breasted Merganser: arr Mar 27, Mohawk R (bsh).

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: first Mar 2, Kiskatom (JHB). Goshawk: only three reports, all in Jan (ADBC). Sharp-shinned Hawk: five reports scattered through the winter; probable migrants Mar 27, Hudson (TB, AB) and Mar 28, Colonie (JF, DR). Cooper's Hawk: five reports during period, including two Mar 28 at Colonie (JF, DR) and at Schodack Center (Lee & Virginia Burland). Red-tailed Hawk: rather scarce in most localities this winter. Red-shouldered Hawk: four reports Dec-Jan; a return movement noted in Mar, with individuals reported at Catskill Mar 16 (BB) and at three localities Mar 28. Rough-legged Hawk: the most common hawk in most areas Jan-Mar., max 10 Feb 13 between Albany and Catskill (WBS et al). **Bald Eagle:** an adult observed in flight near Chatham Center Feb 16 (Murray Giddings, George Milne) and an imm was observed in flight over VFG Mar 28 (SBC). Marsh Hawk: only three different reports throughout the period. Osprey: a very early individual was south of Hudson Mar 27 (ADBC). **Gyr Falcon:** one (dark phase) Jan 21, ADBC Sanctuary, Old Chatham; one dark phase (the same?) Feb 1 near Chatham Center; and two (dark phase) Feb 13, a few miles south of Albany (all reports from Dr. E. M. Reilly, Jr.). **Peregrine:** an adult was observed at close range bedeviling a flock of Cowbirds and Blue Jays on Feb 6 at Canaan (AG).

Bobwhite: at Meadowdale and Lyons L, Nassau. Wild Turkey: reported from Red Rock (Fred & Myra Smilow) and Windham (Blanche Wasson). **Virginia Rail:** 1-2 were at a spring-fed marsh near New Salem from late Dec-early Mar (many observers); this appears to be the first winter record for this Region. Killdeer: last Dec 13, WR (bsh); no winter reports, first Mar 3, near Castleton (PPW); gradual influx throughout Mar. Woodcock: an injured individual came to a feeder in Burnt Hills from Dec-Feb (DJT); first migrants Mar 24, Colonie (JF, DR), late. Common Snipe: 1-2 wintered at the same marshy area near New Salem as the rails did; this is the same marsh in which at least one Snipe has appeared for the last three winters; no migrants reported during Mar. **Glaucous Gull:** one adult was on the UH Mar 6-8 (bsh) and another was at SS Mar 20 (SBC), as well as

at least one additional unidentified "white-winged" gull. **Iceland Gull:** one in very dusky plumage, judged a first-year imm, was on the UH Dec 19 and 27 (bsh)—the only report. **Great Black-backed Gull:** numbers remaining on the UH throughout Dec and early Jan were unprecedented, including 20 Dec 19 (bsh) and 23 TCC Jan 2; numbers dwindled rapidly to one Jan 9-10 (SBC) but a few remained all winter; large influx in early Mar, max 40 SS Mar 7 (PPW) and Mar 20 (SBC). **Herring Gull:** good numbers remained late on the UH into early Jan—e.g., 95 TCC Jan 2—these dwindled rapidly, a few remained throughout the winter, with a general influx from Mar 3 on. **Ring-billed Gull:** similar in pattern to the Herring Gull, but fewer numbers.

**Mourning Dove:** wintered quite locally in very high numbers—e.g., 187 ADCC and 134 TCC Jan 2. **Screech Owl:** only four reports received. **Great Horned Owl:** the most common owl of the winter, present throughout the Region. **Snowy Owl:** relatively few were present, contrary to expectations, after their early appearance in 1964; a total of nine probably different birds were reported, Dec-Mar. **Barred Owl:** only three reports—Dec 24, Altamont (Beverly Waite), Jan 16, Guilderland (MJ) and Mar 29, Hudson (TB, AB). **Long-eared Owl:** one was picked up after flying into the side of a barn and breaking its neck on Feb 17 near Cairo (Norma Bondy). **Short-eared Owl:** only one, near Dormansville Jan 31 (*fide* MK). No Saw-whet Owls reported.

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** **Belted Kingfisher:** about six scattered winter reports, no appreciable influx in Mar. **Yellow-shafted Flicker:** more reports than usual: two in Dec, eight in Jan, five in Feb; there appeared to be a slight influx throughout Mar. **Pileated Woodpecker:** rather few. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** one female in Niskayuna, at the same feeding station at which a female appeared last winter, on Dec 20, Dec 24 and Jan 2 (RPY). **Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** one, Feb 7 in the Schroom L area (JF). **Horned Lark:** numbers seemed somewhat low in most areas. **Common Crow:** remained into Jan in larger numbers than past three years—e.g. 589 SCC Dec 26 and 466 ADCC Jan 2. **Boreal Chickadee:** only one verified report for the winter—one, Colonie, Dec 30 (JF). **Tufted Titmouse:** holding its own or increasing, 24 reported on the ADCC. GCC, SCC and TCC combined. **Red-breasted Nuthatch:** only from areas where it nests and usually winters, such as ADBC Sanctuary, Tomhannock Reservoir, and northern Warren County. **Winter Wren:** one, WR, Jan 6 (EH)—only report.

**Mockingbird:** at least 4-5 in different areas throughout the winter. **Catbird:** one at a Schenectady feeder Dec 26 and 28 (DJT)—only report. **Brown Thrasher:** one remained at a Niskayuna feeder through Jan and into early Feb (Mrs. Frazer Price) and another was at a feeder in Catskill from Dec 20 through Jan (*fide* JHB). **Robin:** remained in small numbers in many sections and in larger numbers in Greene and Columbia Counties; migration late; large waves Mar 28 and 29. **Bluebird:** reported at Colonie, Ghent, Bethlehem Center and Greenville during the winter; returned Mar 9 to a nesting area in East Greenbush (*fide* PPW) and Mar 10 in Catskill (JHB); it was absent then from the East Greenbush site for about two weeks, then reappeared; also appeared at Gallupville nesting sites Mar 26 and 29, (GMZ), suggesting waves early and late in Mar. **Golden-crowned Kinglet:** very scarce except in larger evergreen tracts. **Bohemian Waxwing:** one, Dec 6, feeding in a Mountain Ash tree in Niskayuna with several Cedar Waxwings following the severe ice storm Dec 5 which coated most things with an inch of ice (RPY). **Cedar Waxwing:** a few were reported throughout the winter, with definite increase in Mar, when flocks of up to 50 appeared. **Northern Shrike:** probable flight year: at least nine adults reported in four counties, Dec-Feb; surprisingly, no Mar reports. **Migrant Shrike:** only one, Black Creek Marshes Mar 28 (BRS).



**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Meadowlark: more common locally than usual, with 22 SCC and 40 ADCC. Redwinged Blackbird: a few wintered, first migrant flocks Mar 1 and 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), appearing widely Mar 5-7. Common Grackle: followed same pattern, first Mar 2, Castleton marshes (PPW). Rusty Blackbird: at Loudonville Dec 20 (MWF), near New Salem Dec 28, Jan 17 and 24 (WBS, BRS) and Niskayuna Jan 13-23 and Feb 1 (HE); returning birds seen Mar 2, Castleton marshes (PPW), followed by a few later in Mar. Cowbird: many wintered, max 376 ADCC; appeared to return later than the other blackbirds; a large influx occurred Mar 24-31, when flocks of 20-50 appeared in all sections.

Cardinal: still increasing throughout Region, with 139 on GCC, ADCC, SCC and TCC combined. Dickcissel: an adult ♀ was seen Feb 2 at a feeder near Catskill (BB). Evening Grosbeak: rather rare most of winter except possibly in mountainous areas; increased considerably in Mar when flocks of up to 30 were seen at feeding stations. Purple Finch: almost wholly absent, early winter, but increased rapidly after mid-Feb to become easily the most common finch in Mar; at Niskayuna, RPY banded 202 from Feb 21-Mar 31, none before. Pine Grosbeak: two reports—five, Hannacroix, mid-Feb (T. & M. Zaph) and twelve, Schroom L area, Feb 27 (bsh). Redpoll: only five reports Dec-Feb. Pine Siskin: even less common, a "few", Durham, Feb (Vernon Haskins) and one in Troy Mar 29 (Mary Kilcawley). Goldfinch: less common than last winter; a large group of about 500 was near Schroom L Mar 13 (DR). White-winged Crossbill: the lone report of crossbills—group of three near Schroom L Feb 7 (JF). Rufous-sided Towhee: two reports—one at a Chatham feeder, Jan-Mar (MDM); one to Dec 6, Burnt Hills feeder (BRS).

**Savannah Sparrow:** up to three at feeders in Greene County in Jan and Feb (fide JHB). **Oregon Junco:** three reports, all of adult males in which dark hood sharply separated from brown back with rusty flanks: one, Colonie, sporadically at feeder, Jan 1-Mar 28 (JF); one, Catskill, Jan 25-Feb 6 (JHB); one, Claverack, Feb 4-10 (HT). Field Sparrow: appeared this winter at Colonie (JF), Chatham (MDM), Claverack (HT), Elnora (DJT), Ghent (PE, GE) and Loudonville (Mabel French). **Harris' Sparrow:** the first records for this Region. An adult appeared at a feeder in Voorheesville "sometime late last fall" and remained to Feb 24. The "black cap, face and bib, pink bill, large size, clear gray breast, ocher cheeks, long tail" were noted by many observers, including WBS, bsh, HE and DJT. An imm appeared at a feeder near Athens Jan 27 after a snowstorm. This bird displayed "pink bill, large size, erect stance, ocher cheeks, clear gray breast which was traversed across the upper part by irregular black blotches forming a necklace-like pattern." It was also seen by many observers including Geoffrey Carleton, WBS, JHB, PPW and DJT, and was still present Mar 31. **White-crowned Sparrow:** two at a feeder in Castleton (JC) and one at a feeder in Ghent (PE, GE); both appeared in mid-Feb and remained into Mar. **White-throated Sparrow:** at least ten winter reports: scarcer than in 1963-64. **Fox Sparrow:** late at Guilderland (MJ, Mary Lynch) and East Chatham (P. & N. Schwabe)—to mid-Dec. Spring migration quite late, first Mar 24, Kiskatom (Walter Smith) and Mar 26, Westerlo (MK). A very large wave occurred Mar 29 following a snowstorm when 1-15 appeared at almost every feeding station in the area. Observers in the field the previous weekend, Mar 27-28, did not see any, so it seems likely the birds moved in (or were grounded) the night of Mar 28. **Swamp Sparrow:** very scarce, only reports SCC Dec 27 and at Black Creek Marshes (one) Feb 21 (bsh). **Song Sparrow:** fewer than usual. **Lapland Longspur:** only from Meadowdale, Dec 6-Feb 7, max 4 (several observers) and near Kinderhook Feb 13 (HT, PE, GE). **Snow Bunting:** very few, last Mar 21 near Canajoharie (GMZ).

12 Columbia Drive, East Greenbush 12061



## REGION 9 — DELAWARE - HUDSON

EDWARD D. TREACY

The season was marked by frequent snowfalls which were light and relatively unimportant except for the fact that most of them occurred on weekends and kept many a birder at home. Through Dec, Jan and Feb there were 14 weekends with some kind of precipitation. In spite of the number of storms, the overall amount of precipitation was abnormally low, and did little to break the drought conditions which have prevailed for the past three years.

There were no extremes of temperature, but the weather bureau did report the season to be colder than average. The Hudson did not freeze till late in Jan, and was open again in Feb after a spell of above freezing temperature. Mar was abnormally cool when compared to Feb.

Northern finches failed to show with only a few Evening Grosbeaks reported. Not one Pine Grosbeak, Pine Siskin, Redpoll or Crossbill was seen. Populations of those winter visitors that did arrive were low, but an influx of accidentals did add some "spice" to the birding.

Abbreviations used: First four letters of each county; RASCC—Rockland Audubon Society Christmas Count, Dec 26, Robert F. Deed, compiler; PCC—Peekskill Christmas Count, Dec 27, John Given, compiler.

Contributors: WBC—Waterman Bird Club; A&MB—Arlene & Martin Borko; GB—Gene Brown; PC—Pauline Chernick; RD—Roz Davis; ID—Iris Dean; ME—Martha Earl; JG—Jane Geisler; FG—Florence Germond; TG—Tom Gilbert; S&RG—Stan & Ruth Grierson; FH—Fred Hough; AJ—Alice Jones; M&JK—Mary & Jim Key; ML—Mabel Little; DL—Dorothy Lloyd; KN—Ken Niven; EP—Eleanor Pink; JR—Mrs. John Remensnyder; EDT—Edward D. Treacy.

**Loons — Ducks:** The annual waterfowl count in Jan took place with the usual bad weather, but with 21 species reported, it was the largest number of species recorded in any one year. The addition of American Widgeon, Shoveler and Old Squaw brought the all time total to 24 species for this event. The 2,217 individuals recorded was better than last year's 2,082, but considerably below the high of 3,306 in 1955. **Red-necked Grebe:** unreported most years; one in spring plumage, Binnewater Pond, Greenville, Oran on Mar 28 (ID). **Horned Grebe:** not reported by most contributors; four Hudson Riv reports from Dutch; earliest Mar 20 (WBC). **Mute Swan:** large numbers of last fall on Rockland Lake diminished to three in Jan, but by Feb 6, 65 were found there in a small area of open water (GB). **Canada Goose:** wintered in very sparse numbers, migrants appeared on Ashokan Res on Mar 14, and passed over the Region in good numbers thereafter. **Snow Goose:** one wintered on Rockland Lake, and about 20 appeared on the Hudson near Saugerties on Mar 31 (JR).

Most species of ducks moved in with the early thaw in Mar, but numbers were down for the most part. An exception was the Pintail, reported in unprecedented numbers in Oran. On Mar 25 better than 60 were observed at Goshen, and this number increased to more than 100 by the end of the period. About a dozen were still present in mid-Apr (ME). **Green-winged Teal:** only one reported wintering; good numbers throughout the Region during Mar. **Wood Duck:** only two wintering birds reported, both from Dutch; Mar migrants appear to be down in numbers. **Ring-necked Duck:** wintering numbers better than usual in West and Putn; migrants arrived on time elsewhere, but numbers were poor. **Canvasback:** the promising numbers found in fall migration on the Hudson were again reported this spring when 125 birds on Mar 13 increased to 500 on Mar 20 at Crugers Is, Dutch (WBC). **Scaup:** numbers down; only eight wintering birds reported on the lower Hudson, and Mar migrants were very few; unreported for much of the Region. **Ruddy Duck:** a heartening 107 birds on the

waterfowl count at Tappan Zee Bridge, and 181 on the PCC recalls the several hundred birds that usually wintered on the lower Hudson about ten years ago, and have been absent these recent winters. Hooded Merganser: no winter records outside of West; Mar migrants arrived on time and in good numbers.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: one winter record of a bird in Dutch on Feb 18 (EP, FG); arr dates were normal, but numbers were very low till the end of the period. Accipiters: very scarce. Only three Sharp-shins reported, all from Dutch. Red-tailed Hawk: winter numbers down from previous years; most resident birds in usual nesting areas by mid-Mar. **Broad-winged Hawk:** one, apparently in good condition, was reported at Moore's Mills, Dutch on Dec 20 by a "careful birder" (JG); this report was carefully checked by Otis Waterman. Rough-legged Hawk: numbers not bad; reports from Ulst (two), Dutch (seven), Oran (two), Rock (one) and Sull (one). Bald Eagle: failed to return to the Basher Kill area of Sull for the first time in several winters; numbers still dropping throughout Region, not more than one or two birds reported wintering along the Hudson; one bird still returning to the Ashokan Res area of Ulst each winter. Marsh Hawk: no winter reports; only four Mar migrants, all from Dutch. Sparrow Hawk: numbers down thru the winter, but up to better than average at the end of the period.

Coot: very few reported to date. Woodcock: one wintering bird at Monticello on Jan 12 (KN); migrants arr on time in expected numbers. Common Snipe: one winter bird on Dec 22 at Katonah, West (S&RG); migrants arr the first week of Mar in most areas. Most species of gulls normal. Great-Black-backed Gull: greatly increased; Feb 13, more than 56 on a bar in the Hudson off Cornwall with at least as many more in the distance on the river, by far the most numerous gull in that area that day (EDT). **Iceland Gull:** reported on the Mearns Bird Club Christmas Count and seen several times thereafter on the Hudson from Croton Pt to Newburgh. Mourning Dove: plentiful; Mabel Little had 43 at her feeder in Carmel for most of the winter. **Snowy Owl:** observed last on Dec 1 in Poughkeepsie and Dec 8 in Scotchtown, Oran. Short-eared Owl: one, Jan 31 at Standford, Dutch (AJ&DL).

**Goatsuckers — Shrikes:** Yellow-shafted Flicker: winter birds reported from Ulst in Jan (FH), and the "highest numbers in years" for the season in Dutch (WBC); spring birds very late in returning. Red-headed Woodpecker: resident birds remained in the Blooming Grove area of Oran; Dutch report of one bird on Jan 31 at Poughkeepsie (AJ). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: several reported; WBC Christmas Count Jan 2 at Vassar College, and PCC Dec 27 at Kitchawan; two at GB feeder in Upper Nyack (no date). **Black-backed Three-toed Woodpecker:** one vicinity of St. Joseph's Normal Inst at Barrytown Dutch from Jan 16 to Apr 5, seen in same place several times in the past few years; one at Red Oaks Mill (south of Poughkeepsie) Feb 9 thru that month, and again on Apr 6 (many observers both birds). Phoebe: late and scarce thru end of period. Horned Lark; probably wintered in the Greenville area of Oran, no reports elsewhere; migrants reappeared in favorite haunts in early Mar. Tree Swallow: very late throughout most of Region; not observed in most places thru end of period. Purple Martin: arr most locales on time; did not appear early in Walden area as it did last year. **Maggie:** one in the Monticello area from Feb 18 to 21, observed by Pauline Chernick, Ed McBride, and Ken Niven. Fish Crow: one, possibly two reported all winter in Dutch—only report. Red-breasted Nuthatch: very scarce, only two reported. Brown Creeper: numbers normal, heavy movement reported from Putn last two weeks of Mar.

Winter Wren: none reported for much of the Region; three Jan birds in Dutch, four on the PCC, and seven on the RASCC are maxima for the

season. Carolina Wren: slight improvement this season over the low of last year, but very few reported. Mockingbird: continues northward march; two winter reports from Ulst, and too many to mention in the southern portion. Catbird: only winter report, one at Marydell, Upper Nyack on Dec 20 (GB). Brown Thrasher: two Feb reports from Putn. Robin: wintered in good numbers throughout the Region; several flocks of notable size reported. Hermit Thrush: one at Mt Kisco on Feb 3, and one at South Salem on Feb 4 (SG). Bluebird: a very good winter for this species. Singles, and small flocks reported from most areas, and one flock of 30 at Mt Kisco on Jan 10. Nesting activity was reported in early Mar, and one pair returned to Sam Phelps' home in Walden on the early date of Feb 19. **Varied Thrush:** this accidental remained in the Liberty area of Sull from Feb 20 to Mar 30, and was seen by many observers both local and visiting. Golden-crowned Kinglet: normal early in the season; few Mar reports. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: few reports; maximum of eight on PCC. Pipit: none reported till Mar 31, when 25 or more were seen at Campbell Hall (ME). Cedar Waxwing: scarce in Ulst, but normal to better elsewhere; WBC reports 200 at Annandale on Mar 20, and 500 at Salt Point on Mar 21. Northern Shrike: sparingly reported; maximum of seven thru Jan and Feb in Dutch (WBC).

**Vireos — Sparrows:** Myrtle Warbler: one, Feb 28 at Poughkeepsie (M&JK); five on the RASCC and 16 on the PCC. Yellow-breasted Chat: one, Dec 7 at East Park, Dutch (TG). **Baltimore Oriole:** more winter reports than ever before; one at Vassar College Dec 30 to Jan 2 (M&JK); a pair at the feeder of Eleanor Towner at Middletown from Dec 20 to Jan 4: one at Washingtonville from Jan 10 to Feb 4 (ME); one at the feeder of GB in Upper Nyack on Jan 3 increased to two Jan 10; one at a feeder near Carmel for two days in Feb was photographed (ML). Rusty Blackbird: a few Dutch reports and several from Rock; one on the PCC. Grackle: a few winter reports from Dutch are unusual; in the southern portion, the 194 birds found on the PCC is more to be expected; migrants started north in early Mar and were numerous by mid-month. Cowbird: usual wintering population; migration was late.

Cardinal: numbers continue to climb; Christmas counts in the southern portion show one or two hundred each. **Black-headed Grosbeak:** a male arr at the feeder of Eleanor Pink in Pleasant Valley on Jan 23 and remained thru April 1 (many observers and photographs)—first record for Dutch. Evening Grosbeak: absent from most areas; a few singles and small flocks reported; only large concentration was in the Monticello area of Sull where 86 birds were counted on Jan 28 (PC, A&MB). Purple Finch: numbers very low; only a few winter reports, scarce to the end of the period. Pine Grosbeak: none. House Finch: usual numbers in Rock, but 25 at the feeder of Mrs. Javius Matsumoto in Chappaqua, West; a few reports from southern Oran as the species spreads north. Goldfinch: usual numbers to less in certain sections. Rufous-sided Towhee: the usual wintering birds. Savannah Sparrow: scattered winter reports; numbers improving through Mar. **Lark Sparrow:** another first record for Dutch; one at the feeder of Mrs. C. Terhune near Salt Point from Feb 5 to Apr 2 (many observers and photographs). Oregon Junco: two Dutch records of "black hooded" birds, one Jan 3 thru Feb 7 at Poughquag and one Jan 17 thru Feb at Stantordaville (many observers); two "grey-headed" birds (pink-sided) reported, one at Poughquag from Jan 3 thru Feb 7 (many observers) and one at Tillson, Ulst on Jan 24 (Mrs. Geo. Dunn). Tree Sparrow: much lower numbers this year; local Christmas Count numbers were half their usual amount; departed on schedule. Field Sparrow: usual wintering numbers, few and local. White-crowned Sparrow: one, Dec 1 thru Mar 31 at Millbrook, Dutch (FG). White-throated Sparrow: few all winter; numbers down, even during migration. Fox Sparrow: heavy migration reported thru most of the Region; a few winter birds. Snow Bunting: unreported from most



areas; two individuals, one in Jan and one in Feb, Dutch; a flock of 40 were reported from Millerton on Mar 20 (RD).

Note: Spring reports are due by June 5

Pellwood Lake, Highland Falls 10928

## REGION 10 — MARINE

PETER W. POST AND GUY A. TUDOR

The winter season was characterized by slightly warmer than average temperatures during Dec and Feb. In contrast, Jan temperatures averaged well below normal.

The combined total of the 12 Christmas Counts which were taken wholly within Region 10, was 163 species (not including several additional species present during the count period). The four "biggest" counts were: Southern Nassau—124; Central Suffolk—110; Bronx-S. Westchester—106; and Captree—104.

In general, the current period was distinguished by a noticeable scarcity of birds. "Half-hardy" species were especially low in numbers as soon as the winter set in, when compared with last year. Even such a normally common wintering species as Tree Sparrow was extremely scarce, as were Field and Swamp Sparrows. "Winter Finches" were very low; for example, only two Evening Grosbeaks were seen on all the Christmas Counts.

The only group of birds that was more numerous than usual were the birds-of-prey commonly associated with open country, numbers being confined to the coastal marshes. Rough-legged Hawks were even more abundant than last winter. It was apparently the greatest flight year ever recorded in our Region; in the Orient area, as many as 15 individuals were seen in a day. Marsh Hawks, Snowy and Short-eared Owls, and both species of shrikes were present in well above normal numbers. On Jan 5, Ward saw 25 hawks of five species along the Jones Beach strip: one Red-tail, five Rough-legs, 12 Marsh, one Pigeon and six Sparrow.

Although temperatures for March averaged only slightly below normal, most spring arrivals were well behind schedule, or reduced in numbers. Norse remarked that this March was one of the poorest in recent years in Inwood Hill Park. The first major landbird movement did not occur until the last few days of the period. Although such species as Robin and Fox Sparrow had appeared earlier in March, they did not arrive in numbers until the 28th along the coast and the 30th in the city parks.

Notably rarities consisted of Common Murre, "Spotted" Towhee (present since Nov 25) and Brambling. There were also extremely late occurrences of Little Blue Heron, Scarlet Tanager, and Black-and-white and Blackpoll Warblers.

Much of our information comes from the local Christmas Counts. Those abbreviated are as follows: BkCC—Brooklyn; BXCC—Bronx-S. Westchester; CaCC—Captree; CCCC—Central Suffolk; MkCC—Montauk; NNCC—Northern Nassau; QnCC—Queens; SmCC—Smithtown; SNCC—Southern Nassau.

Abbreviations used: max—maximum one day count during the period; mob—many observers; LLASB—Lyman Langdon Audubon Society Bulletin; JBWR—Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge; CC—Christmas Count; S. I.—Staten Island; imm—immature.

Contributors frequently cited: IA—Irwin Alperin; RA—Robert Arbib; AB—Albert Bell; NB—Ned Boyajian; PB—Paul Buckley; JB—John Bull; IC—Irving Cantor; GC—Geoffrey Carleton; RC—Richard Cohen; TD—



Thomas Davis; FE—Frank Enders; RF—Robert Fisher; RH—Richard Harrison; FH—Fred Heath; KK—Klaus Kallman; RK—Richard Koepfel; RL—Roy Latham; EL—Emanuel Levine; EM—Ellen McMullen; LM—Lee Morgan; WN—William Norse; HP—Hugh Pemberton; RP—Richard Plunkett; PP—Peter Post; DP—Dennis Puleston; DR—Daniel Rafferty; GR—Gilbert Raynor; TR—Thomas Robben; WS—Walter Sedwitz; FS—Fred Shaeffer; SS—Si Stepinoff; RS—Robert Sutherland; ES—Esther Swayer; WT—Walter Terry; GT—Guy Tudor; CW—Cornelius Ward; LW—LeRoy Wilcox; EW—Edwin Willis; AW—Alvin Wollin.

**Loons — Ducks:** Red-necked Grebe: Dec 26, Gravesend Bay (ES); Jan 3-Feb 24, Jones Inlet (mob); Feb 27, Great Kills, S.I. (RS). Double-crested Cormorant: Dec 23, Jones Inlet (WS); Dec 26, Montauk (EW, RH, B. Berliner). Great Blue Heron: max 45, Jan 3, SNCC. Common Egret: six, Mar 28, Jones (EL)—arrival. Snowy Egret: Mar 14, Tobay (CW)—same arrival date as last year; widespread arrival Mar 24, JBWR to Montauk. Little Blue Heron: imm, Dec 16, Lawrence (K. Berlin, J. Glasberg, JB)—latest record for Region. Green Heron: Jan 2, E. Quogue (LW). Glossy Ibis: Mar 28, JBWR (RS)—earliest arrival.

Mute Swan: max 672, Dec 29, CCCC. Brant: 665 in three locations (Pelham, N. Rochelle, Baxter Creek), Dec 27, BxCC—high winter count away from L.I. Snow Goose: six reports of singles from L.I. Blue Goose: two, Jan 3, Tobay (NB, RH). Gadwall: max 176, Jan 3, SNCC. Blue-winged Teal: three, Dec 26, JBWR (FH, FE); Dec 29, E. Moriches (P. Stoutenburgh); Jan 3 thru period, Hempstead (mob); arrival Mar 21, Brookville, Montauk and JBWR (mob). European Widgeon: Dec 27, N. Rochelle (IC, TR); Dec 28-mid Jan, Southaven (DP); Feb 27-Mar 13, Sagaponack (mob). Ring-necked Duck: max counts: 182, Dec 29, CCCC; 72, Dec 28, SmCC; 40, Jan 2, CaCC. Canvasback: 651, Feb 16, Jerome Reservoir (WS). Lesser Scaup: 320, Mar 17, Jerome Reservoir (WS). Bufflehead: 1000, Dec 27, BxCC—new high for Bronx. Harlequin Duck: up to three, Dec 13-mid Jan, Orient (DP, RL); one pair, late Dec-thru period, Jones Inlet (mob). Common Eider: 20, Dec 13, Orient (DP); 20, Jan 30, Montauk (DP); 15, Jan 17, Captree (A. Dove)—new high for western L.I.; two reports from unusual locations—Dec 26, N. Channel Bridge, JBWR (LM, FS); Dec 28, SmCC. King Eider: one to five individuals from five locations (Jones Inlet to Montauk); three of these were perfect adult drakes. Ruddy Duck: dropoff at JBWR—920, Nov 24; 602, Nov 28; 356, Dec 2; 169, Dec 17; 71, Dec 19; 42, Dec 26 (H. Hays). Hooded Merganser: max 132, Dec 29, CCCC; 111, Jan 2, CaCC. Red-breasted Merganser: max 2100, Dec 28, SmCC.

**Hawks — Owls:** Turkey Vulture: Jan 3, Hempstead (AW, S. Schiff, T. Lomand). Goshawk: adult, Mar 14, Rye (RA). Rough-legged Hawk: 50 individuals were seen on nine CC's; sample max counts: 15, Feb 6, E. Marion to Orient (DP, GR); 10, Feb 3-6, Jones strip (mob); eight, Dec 29, Southaven (DP). Out of 37 birds in which the plumage was noted, 21 were in the light phase, 13 were dark and 3 were intermediate. Peregrine Falcon: an individual was noted roosting on a Manhattan building, Feb 19-22 (RK, F. Davis). Pigeon Hawk: Dec 27, Cold Spring Harbor (J. Alderman); Dec 30, Shinnecock Hills (GR); Jan 3, Atlantic Beach (JB, D. Heilbrun); Jan 9, Patchogue (DP); Jan 23, Jones (CW); two, Feb 6, Orient (DP, GR, WT, et al)—apparently more common in winter than formerly; six were seen last winter, also by reliable observers. Sparrow Hawk: max 25-30, Mar 24, Montauk to Westhampton (LLAS).

Sora: Mar 8 thru period, Brookhaven (DP); Mar 29, JBWR (RS). Common Gallinule: one wintered at Hook Pond (mob); two Jan. 10, Pond X, Lawrence (R. Sloss). Golden Plover: two, Mar 31, JBWR (S. Komito)—equals the earliest record. Ruddy Turnstone: three, Jan 23, Shinnecock

Inlet (DP, SS); 12, Feb 27, Great Kills, S.I. (RS)—high winter count. Common Snipe: 75 were recorded on nine CC's—very high; max 22, Jan 30, Mecox (GR). Short-billed Dowitcher: Mar 27-28, Tobay (KK, TD, FS, RS)—second earliest record. Semiplumated Sandpiper: Jan 2, Oakbeach (GT).

Glaucous Gull: good year, 11 reports from Dec 27-Mar 14; max three, Dec 27, Eltingville Beach, S.I. (F. Wolfarth, et al). An unusual concentration of "white-winged" gulls occurred Feb 7 on Central Park Reservoir—two adult Glaucous, three-four adult Iceland and one imm Iceland (PP, GC). This is a highly unusual number and proportion of adults; the following day an imm Glaucous was at the same location (GC). Iceland Gull: about 14 reports throughout period. Great Black-backed Gull: 4484 (3000 at Spring Creek—FH), Dec 26, BkCC—new national CC max. Herring Gull: the combined total of all CC's was 140,270. Ring-billed Gull: max 1616, Jan 3, SNCC. Black-headed Gull: three, thru Jan 2, Moriches (mob); adult, Jan 2, 179th St. & Hudson R. (WN); imm, Jan 2, Captree (PP); adult, Jan 3, Pt Lookout (PB); Jan 23, Montauk (DP, GR). Bonaparte's Gull: max 1500, Jan 3, Mamaroneck (SS). Razorbill: Dec 26, Montauk (R. Odell); Mar 2, Westhampton Beach (SS). Thick-billed Murre: Feb 27, Bellport (S. Bedell, S. Hunter fide A. Cooley)—found oiled; specimen in Bellport HS collection. Common Murre: Jan 26, Short Beach (W. Friton, DR)—oiled bird found alive; excellent photo will appear in future issue of Kingbird. Dovekie: two, Dec 26, Ditch Plains, Montauk (RF).

Mourning Dove: max 349, Jan 3, SNCC. Barn Owl: up to three individuals on Jones strip, Dec 3-Jan 3 (mob); three, Orient (RL)—two of these found dead in late Dec, third found dead in Feb; Mar 7, Moriches (GR). Great Horned Owl: nesting records: pair in Osprey nest, Feb, Shelter Is (H. & P. Callahan fide A. Dignan); pair with one owlet three weeks old, Apr 3, Southhampton (DP, GR); pair have nested for at least past five years at Pelham, but increasing disturbance resulted in unsuccessful attempt this spring (KK). Snowy Owl: flight year; Richard Cohen's local banding and color-marking program shows that there is considerable ranging of individuals along many miles of barrier beach. Therefore, it is impossible to estimate true numbers present. Of 12 birds banded (11 on L.I., one in Bronx) seven were males, five were females; seven were adults, five were imm. Max seven, Dec 5-6, Jones strip (RC); up to four at Idlewild (fide RC)—during last flight year (1960-61) there were up to 12 here. Latest dates: Mar 27, Orient and Mar 28, Tiana Beach. Among places where birds were seen were at the World's Fair and on the rooftop of PS 64 in Flushing. Barred Owl: Dec 27, Pelham (W. Ephraim); Feb 14, Rye (RA). Short-eared Owl: 67 were recorded on eight CC's; max 23, Jan 3, SNCC. Saw-whet Owl: Jan 3; Jones (S. Yeaton); Feb 24, Speonk (LW); two, Mar 20, Jones (mob).

**Goatsuckers—Warblers:** Yellow-shafted Flicker: max 77, Jan 3, SNCC. Red-bellied Woodpecker: Jan 8, Manhasset Woods (fide LLASB). Red-headed Woodpecker: Dec 26-mid Mar, Marine Park, Brooklyn (H. McCauley, TD, et al). Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Dec 26, Oakland Lake (A. May fide LLASB); Jan 2, E. Islip (M. Kleinbaum); Jan 3, Hempstead (AW, et al); Jan 15, Sea Cliff (AB). Western Kingbird: two present at Riis Park up to Dec 14, one to Jan 13 (mob). Eastern Phoebe: Dec 27, Clason Pt (LM). Horned Lark: max 248, Jan 17, Manorville to Wading River (GR). Tree Swallow: late numbers: max 34 in one flock, Jan 2, Oakbeach (GT, LM); 29, Dec 30, Shinnecock (GR); several scattered birds reported also from south shore during early winter. Fish Crow: max 77, Dec 27, Pelham (SS, M. Russak, et al)—one flock of calling birds mobbing a Snowy Owl; extremely high count for winter. Tufted Titmouse: 38 were recorded on six western L.I. CC's, none from eastern L.I.

Mockingbird: 60 were recorded on nine L.I. CC's (44 on five western L.I. CC's). Brown Thrasher: 50 were recorded on eight CC's; max 14, Dec 29, CSCC. Ruby-crowned Kinglet: 13 were recorded on six CC's; max five, Dec 27, BxCC; the 25 individuals recorded on the NNCC is an error. Cedar Waxwing: max 79, Jan 3, SNCC. Northern Shrike: up to four individuals present on Jones strip, Jan 3-Feb 14 (mob); Dec 26, MkCC. Loggerhead Shrike: Dec 26, Spring Creek (FH); Dec 27, Cold Spring Harbor (J. Alderman); Jan 3-Feb 14, Tobay (mob); Jan 31, Mecox (HP, E. Good); Mar 7, Great Kills, S.I. (RS). Black-and-white Warbler: Dec 27, Cold Spring Harbor (J. Taylor). Blackpoll Warbler: Jan 3, Jones (RP)—a month later than previous late date. Palm Warbler: max five in one flock, Jan 2, Oak-beach (GT, LM). Yellowthroat: Dec 26, Dyker Beach (ES); two, Dec 28, SmCC; Dec 29, CSCC. Yellow-breasted Chat: Jan 5-15, Northport (E. Mudge); Jan 9-13, E. Patchogue (A. Cooley).

**Blackbirds — Sparrows:** Baltimore Oriole: Dec 11-20, Huntington (fide EM); Dec 13-Jan 31, Northport (EM); Dec 15-27, Malverne (LLASB); Dec 27, Glen Cove (NNCC); Dec 26-Jan 4, Babylon (IA); Dec 29 thru period, Westhampton Beach (LW); Jan 3, Hempstead (fide R. Sloss); Feb 19, Woodmere (R. Sloss). Rusty Blackbird: max 54, Dec 26, QnCC. What appeared to be a very late Scarlet Tanager was reported on the Christmas Census, Dec 27, Pelham (M. Russak et al). (Ed Note: With the possibility of confusion with other tanagers, details of identification are being checked.)

Cardinal: 397 were recorded on 10 L.I. CC's (346 on six western L.I. CC's). **Brambling:** male, Feb 11, Idlewild (R. Ryan)—four other reports from the northeast in recent years. The strong possibility of an escape cannot be ruled out; it should be noted, however, that all these records occurred in the winter. Dickcissel: two, Dec 27, Lloyd Harbor (NNCC); Jan 13-Feb 22, Marine Parkway, Brooklyn (H. McCauley). Evening Grosbeak: only six reports of one-four individuals received all winter. House Finch: 1704 were recorded on 11 CC's; note the great increase over last year's total of 992 birds on nine CC's; 223 were banded at Atlantic Beach during Mar (RC). Common Redpoll: four, Dec 28, SmCC; five, Jan 3, Tobay (NB, N. Smith).

Rufous-sided Towhee: max 24, Dec 26, MkCC. **"Spotted" Towhee:** bird reported in fall was present until Jan 24, Bellport (DP)—excellent photo will appear in future issue of Kingbird. Grasshopper Sparrow: Dec 15, Hewlett Harbor (R. Sloss, et al)—exact same location as last year. Sharp-tailed Sparrow: max 13, Dec 29, CSCC; seven, Jan 2, Cedar Beach to Oak-beach (GT, LM, FE). Vesper Sparrow: max 21, Jan 17, Calverton (GR). White-crowned Sparrow: Dec 29, Mastic (R. Schaeffer); one banded and photographed, Feb 22, Syosset (J. Taylor)—two banded here last winter. Lapland Longspur: max 40, Jan 3, Lido Beach (JB, HP).

Corrigendum: The Kentucky Warbler in the previous fall report should be deleted.

Note: Please have Spring reports in by Jun 7 (preferably a week earlier).

Post, 575 W. 183 St., NYS 10033; Tudor, 370 Riverside Drive, NYC 10025



## REVIEWS

*Bird Art in Science.* By Richard L. Scheffel. New York State Museum and Science Service, Albany, New York, 1964, Educational Leaflet No. 16. 50 cents. 8½ x 11 in., vi + 30 pp.

The New York State Museum and Science Service has recently published an attractive illustrated leaflet "Bird Art in Science" to supplement the Museum's permanent exhibit on this subject. Following an introductory section on the uses of bird art and its early development, are brief summaries of the contributions of painters of the birds of North America from early colonial times through Louis Agassiz Fuertes, with mention of a few contemporary artists. A brief bibliography is included.

New York State teachers may request free copies, up to the largest number of students in a single class, from the Museum Education Office. Others may purchase copies at fifty cents each from the New York State Museum and Science Service, Education Building, Albany, New York 12224, remittance made payable to the New York State Education Department. D. McIlroy

*Audubon's Wildlife.* By Edwin Way Teale, with selections from the writings of John James Audubon. A Studio Book — The Viking Press, New York, 1964: 9 x 11 in., viii + 254 pp., 94 pls. (23 in color) of Audubon's birds and mammals. \$15.00

With selections from Audubon's Journal, Mr. Teale pictures Wild America as Audubon saw and experienced it in the early part of the 19th century. Most of the observations which Audubon recorded are references to life along the waterways which were the major routes of regular travel.

Mr. Teale introduces each section of the book with his own comments and in many cases with his comparison of today's conditions. The sections are illustrated by groups of well-reproduced pen drawings and color paintings of birds and mammals. Informative notes have been added to each plate, making the illustrations more meaningful to the reader.

Practically unedited life histories are arranged according to specific habitat groups. These selections go into detail about Audubon's adventures and activities in the field. That he enjoyed the excitement of the chase and felt intense satisfaction in taking game is brought out repeatedly, as in his descriptions of buffalo and cougar hunts and the mention of the large bags of birds he regularly took. To his credit, however, it should be added that he saw the folly of wanton destruction of wildlife and cited many arguments in favor of controls that would curb ruthless destruction.

Edwin Way Teale has carefully selected those portions from Audubon's Journal that give clear insight into the extensive knowledge of nature so vividly portrayed in Audubon's writings and paintings. Alice E. Ulrich

*Thoreau on Birds.* Compiled and with commentary by Helen Cruickshank. McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1964: 7 x 10 in., 322 pp., 16 pls. in black and white. \$7.95.



The introduction discusses Thoreau's philosophy and how, for more acute observation of life, he placed himself in intimate contact with nature. Many pages of excerpts about the birds he observed around Concord and especially at Walden Pond are followed by a group of illustrations taken from books by Audubon, Nuttall and Wilson which Thoreau used as references for identification of birds. A reproduction of a map printed in 1852 shows the places around Concord which he visited and wrote about in his Journal. An alphabetical list of Thoreau's birds with today's common or scientific names is included.

Thoreau's writings on birds are in general limited to New England. He did not describe new birds, but wrote about local birds, their food, nesting habits and song. He was among the first to keep records for Eastern Massachusetts, a practise which has been kept up almost uninterruptedly to the present time.

The selections illustrate the fine sensitivity Thoreau felt for nature, whether it be in his comments on the structure and form of a fall bird nest, or in his description of May bird songs and the related seasonal emergence of plants and flowers; in those passages in which he deplored the unnecessary destruction of hedge and forest habitats for monetary gain, or in the way he accepted predators as a natural control measure, a theory in agreement with good wildlife management today, more than a century later.

Mrs. Cruickshank has selected choice passages from Thoreau's work and has, with the addition of her explanatory commentary, compiled a book that makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in Thoreau, birds, nature or the out-of-doors. Alice E. Ulrich

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Birds of the New York Area. By John Bull. Harper and Row, 1964; 5½ x 8½ in., xiv + 540 pp. \$8.95.

Like most good, new bird books today, John Bull's book has a foreword by Roger Tory Peterson. Of the two major parts into which it is divided, Part I consists of only 65 pages. An average reader should take no more than an hour to peruse this section, and it should repay even the slowest reader interested in the birds of the New York area to spend the required time. Part II consists of accounts of every species of bird recorded in the New York area. Rightly, no descriptions of birds are included, illustrations are purely decorative. Maps are accurate and informative. The Bibliography is a very complete list of references cited, not a list of all published items referring to birds in the area. There are three identical copies of one map, on the end papers and on pages 506-507; surely one of these could have been altered to show present and another past ground cover.

In Part I the work of Mr. Bull's predecessors is well covered. There are references to the collections and data of many people, including Mr. Roy Latham of Orient, Long Island, all of which have been consulted—a truly painstaking task. In the chapter "Quantitative Data—Population Dynamics" Mr. Bull defines such terms as common, abundant, rare, etc.

It is one of the more valuable chapters; without reading and understanding this first, the section on status in the species accounts of Part II would be worthless.

As yet, there are insufficient precise data on breeding populations in the area. We "know" Mr. Bull is correct when he states on page 152 that "The Red-tailed Hawk has decreased considerably in the past thirty years or so". This statement is based on the accumulated experience of competent naturalists in the area, supplemented by statistics from publications and local bird clubs. The day may come when we know that, in a given habitat, so many pairs of Red-tailed Hawks per hundred acres is the "saturation point" and that the breeding population is only about 40% of what it could be or only 60% of what it had been a certain number of years previously. We need such figures in studying the effects on wild birds of the encroachment of civilization or the inconsiderate use of pesticides. The statistics presented are a great step forward; as, under migration one is told of actual numbers seen (or at least reasonable estimates by competent observers) on certain dates. These will allow us to make more accurate statements in the future about declining or increasing populations.

Lack of data in parts of the book should furnish an incentive to birders to help in gathering such information for future editions. If you or your bird club feel that more Purple Finches breed in your region than indicated by the map on page 425, it must be that the information was not available to Mr. Bull. It is up to you to make accurate counts available. I might add here that John Bull has been selected as the editor of the State Bird Book being sponsored by our Federation; if we want to present a book even half as fine as this for New York State, many facts are yet to be published and thus made available to Mr. Bull.

It is high praise to be able to state that the mistakes found are all trivial, unavoidable in a work requiring a mass of references, notes, data, knowledge, and dreary proofreading. R. S. Palmer, in compiling species-data file cards for use in work on his Handbook of North American Birds, reads each page of a new publication very carefully, marking each typographical and other error that he detects. He has thus marked Mr. Bull's work but two or three times (on page 77 it should be *Puffinus diomedea*)—this is phenomenal! A source of possible confusion to readers is the use of a person's name in parentheses, as "(Helmuth)" on page 237 referring to a Black-backed Gull record dated May 14, 1950. Nowhere is it explained that this means that person—Helmuth—is responsible for the record, and that it does not refer to a specimen in Helmuth's collection or to a reference in the Bibliography.

Addition of a list of local bird clubs and their locations would help newcomers get acquainted with others interested in their avocation. As a youth brought up in the area covered by the book, I was familiar with Chapman's, Griscom's, and Cruickshank's works, yet it never dawned on me that there might be someone interested in wildlife nearer to me than the American Museum of Natural History.

The writing is clear; words not defined in a standard desk dictionary are defined in a very short glossary. However, this book is not designed for the very beginner, but if you make any pretense of knowing the birds of the New York City region, or belong to a club or take part in annual or regular bird walks there, you should have a copy. If you are interested in birds and live in adjacent areas, you should own the book. And if you visit N.Y.C. frequently and are a birder, get a copy on your next visit or write for it beforehand. Edgar M. Reilly, Jr.

Two Conservation Committee members have been authors recently. Dwight Chamberlain of Rochester had an article on the Great Horned Owl "Bubo of Virginianus" in the December-January 1964-1965 issue of *The Conservationist*. Dr. Walter Spofford is the author of *Audubon Conservation Report*, No. 1 on the Golden Eagle, available from the National Audubon Society for \$1.00.

## BULLETIN EXCHANGE

As of January 25, 1965, the following member clubs are interested in exchanging club bulletins:

- Alan Devoe Bird Club—**The Warbler**  
Miss Hortense Barten  
Old Chatham, N. Y. 12136
- Brooklyn Bird Club—**Brooklyn Bird Club Newsletter** Oct. thru May  
Brooklyn Bird Club, Academy of Music  
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y. 11217
- Buffalo Audubon Society—**Audubon Outlook** quarterly  
Mr. & Mrs. Harold A. Dodge, Back Creek Rd.  
Hamburg, N. Y. 14075
- Chemung Valley Audubon Society—**The Bulletin, Chemung Valley Aud. Soc.**  
3 times a year  
Miss Wilfred I. Howard, 610 Coburn Street  
Elmira, N. Y.
- Cortland County Bird Club—**The Chickadee** bimonthly  
Cortland Co. Bird Club  
320 West Road, Cortland, N. Y.
- Greene County Bird Club—**The Whip-poor-will**  
Greene County Bird Club  
Catskill, N. Y. 12414
- Huntington Audubon Society—**Newsletter** bimonthly except July  
Mrs. Ellen McMullen, 8 Norwood Road  
Northport, N. Y. 11768
- Jamestown Audubon Society—**News Letter** bimonthly  
Jamestown Audubon Soc'y, 88 Fluvanna Ave.  
Jamestown, N. Y. 14701
- John Burroughs Natural History Society—**The Chirp** bimonthly  
Mrs. Daniel Smiley, Lake Mohonk  
New Paltz, N. Y. 12561
- Linnaean Society of New York—**Linnaean News-Letter** 9 times a year  
Secretary, Linnaean Society of N. Y.  
Am. Museum of Natural History, N. Y. 10024
- The Kingbird**

- Onondaga Audubon Society—**The Kestrel** 3-4 a year  
 Send requests to receive The Kestrel to  
 Mrs. Margaret B. Mathis, 1604 S. Ivy Trail  
 RD 2, Baldwinsville, N. Y. 13027  
 Send exchange copies of your bulletin to  
 Miss Margaret Rusk, 805 Comstock Ave.  
 Syracuse, N. Y. 13210
- Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club—**Wings Over Dutchess** 10 a year  
 Mrs. David H. Jones, Knolls Road  
 Poughkeepsie, N. Y.
- Rockland Audubon Society—**Rockland Audubon Observer** bimonthly  
 Dr. Marjorie R. Hopper, 278 N. Midland Ave.  
 Nyack, N. Y. 10960
- Saw Mill River Audubon Society, Inc.—**Saw Mill River Aud. Soc. Bulletin** 5 times a year  
 Mr. William G. Fennell, 16 Halsey Place  
 Valhalla, N. Y. 10595
- Scarsdale Audubon Society—**The Scarsdale Aud. Soc. Bulletin** bimonthly  
 (except summer)  
 Mrs. Wallace Harper, Jr., 16 Marcourt Drive  
 Chappaqua, N. Y. 10514
- Schuyler County Bird Club—**The Pileated** quarterly  
 Mrs. Perry Bishop  
 Alpine, N. Y. 14805
- Staten Island Museum—**News Bulletin** 8 times a year  
 Staten Island Museum, 75 Stuyvesant Place  
 Staten Island, N. Y.
- Tioga Bird Club—**The Blue Jay** bimonthly  
 Mrs. Ruth Williams, R.D. #2, Box 364  
 Owego, N. Y. 13827
- Corrections or omissions should be called to the attention of Miss  
 Elizabeth S. Manning, Bulletin Exchange Committee.

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## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY OMISSIONS

We regret the following omissions from the membership list in the  
 January Kingbird.

Allen, Arthur W., 561 Eastern Blvd., Watertown 13601 1957

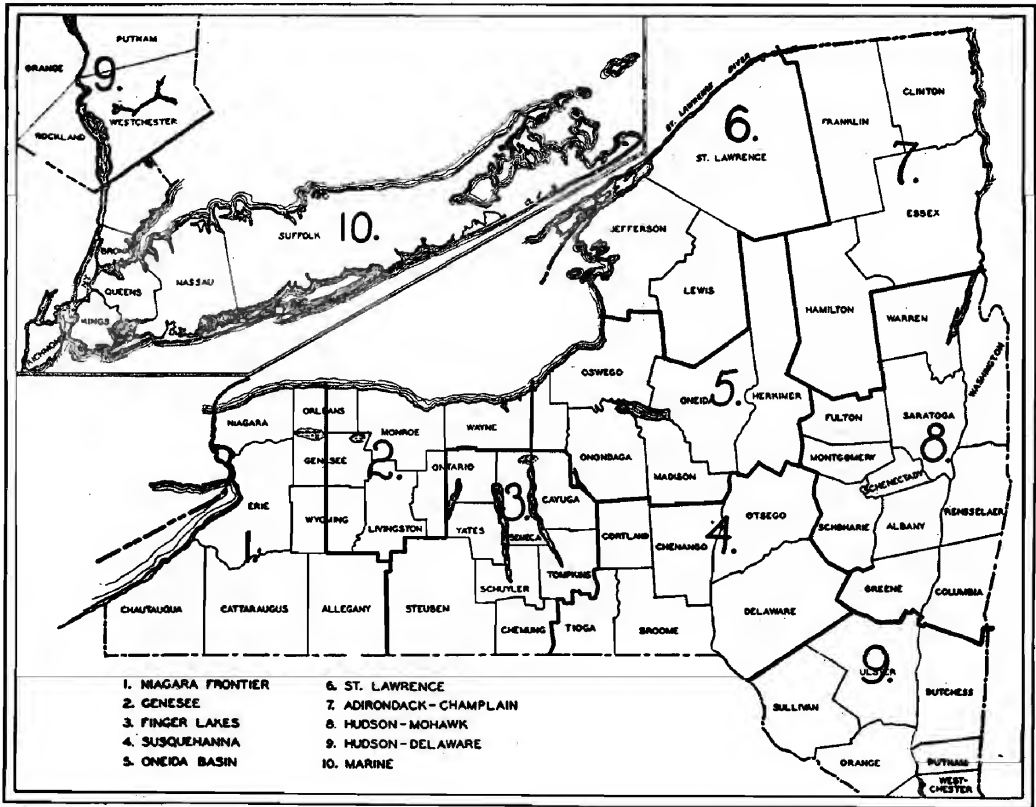
It is Allen E. Kemnitzer of Webster

Dr. Gordon M. Meade is a Charter Member

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## REPORTING REGIONS



**For descriptions of Regions see Kingbird Vol. IV, Nos. 1 and 2**



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